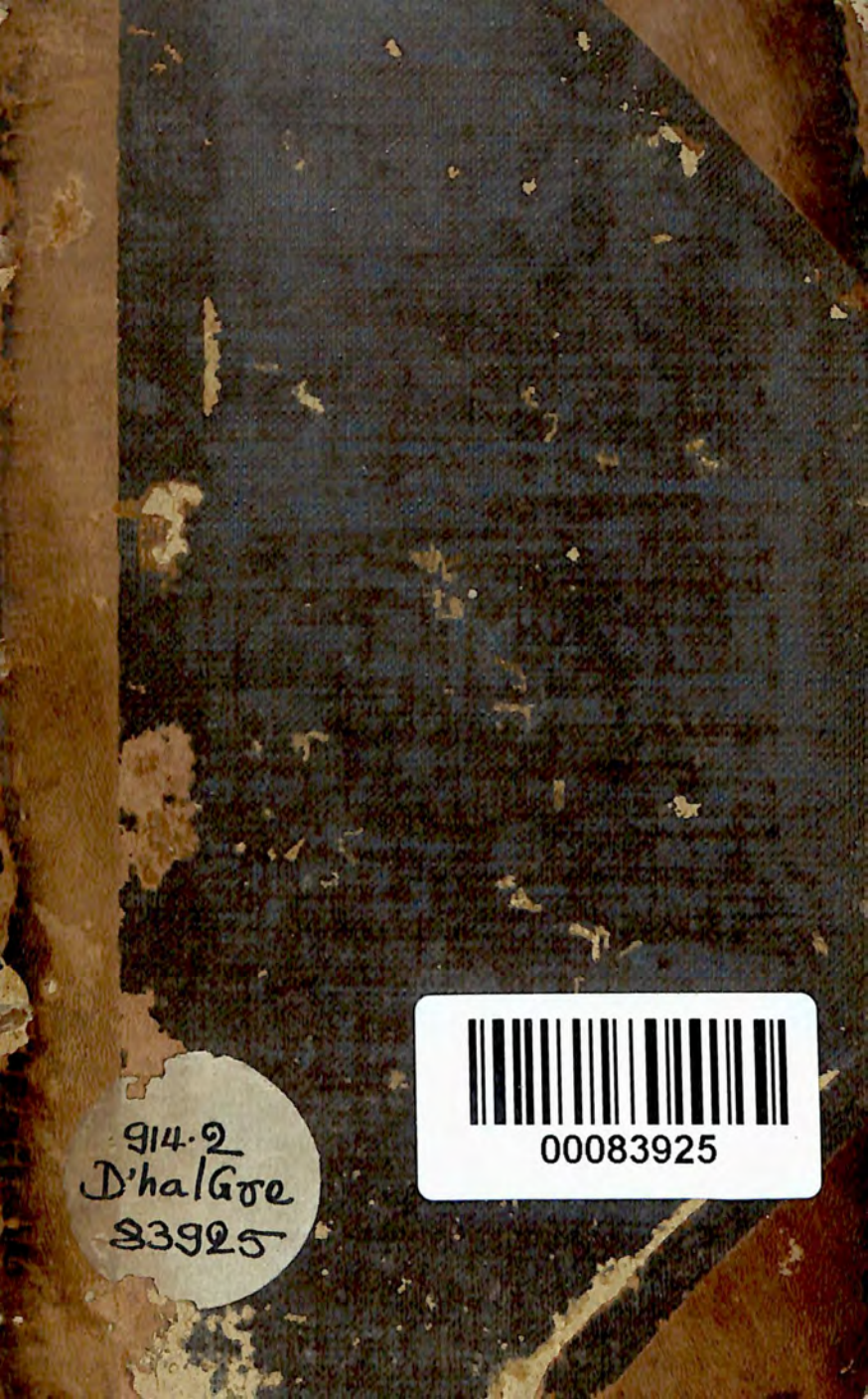
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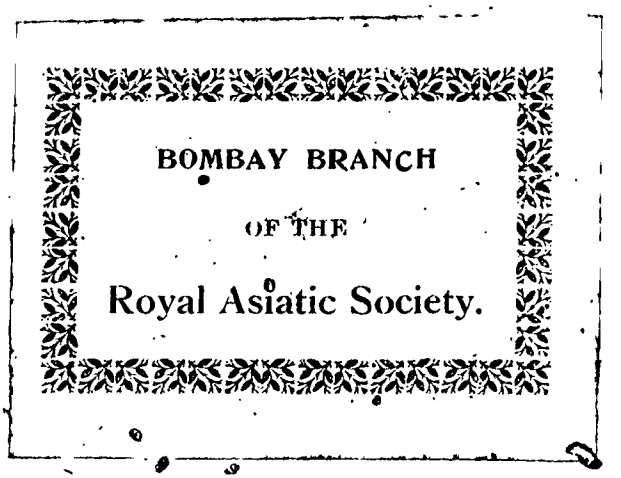

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GREAT BRITAIN

IN 1833.

83925

BY BARON D'HAUSSEZ,

EX-MINISTER OF MARINE UNDER KING CHARLES X.

W 9 28

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

(SUCCESSOR TO HENRY COLBURN.)

1833.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

To the English reader some account of the author of this work cannot fail to be interesting. It is but fitting that he should know who and what the individual is who so freely criticizes his country. With this view, we have thought it necessary to give the following sketch of the life of the author.

Descended from an ancient family of the Parliament of Normandy, the Baron D'Haussez was still young at the epoch of the first revolution. Devoted, like his ancestors, to the royal cause, he entered the ranks of the army

of Brittany. He formed part of the division of M. de Frotté, when that general surrendered and was assassinated in open contempt of the terms of the capitulation.

M. D'Haussez was arrested upon that occasion; and afterwards, upon being restored to liberty, was subjected to a strict *surveillance*. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate to take an active part in the conspiracy against the Consular Government, being one of those concerned, in 1804, in the abortive attempt of Pichegru and Cadoudal. Alhough arrested upon the discovery of the plot, M. D'Haussez escaped trial; but was subjected to a stricter and more rigorous *surveillance* than he had hitherto undergone.

From this period he took no part in public life, nor do we hear more of him till the period of the restoration.

He was returned to the Chamber of Deputies in 1815, and prominently opposed the majority of that chamber.

An official career now opened to M. D'Haussez. Being called to fill successively some important prefectures, he distinguished himself by his talents, and still more by an activity and political energy which were crowned with marked success. His labours, together with the various projects which he had in contemplation, are recorded in the works he has published concerning the Departments under his control. These departments are indebted to him for excellent roads, handsome and useful public buildings, bridges, &c. Nor was he inattentive to agriculture: in his *Etudes Administratives sur les Landes*, published in 1826, he proves what well-directed efforts may accomplish, even on the most sterile soils; indeed the country between the Garonne and the Adour attests the advantages derived from his able superintendence.

The reader who may wish for a further account of the agricultural improvements

effected by M. D'Haussez, and of the efforts made by him in favour of the poor of the different departments over which he presided, is referred to the *Etudes sur les Landes.*

It may not be irrelevant to observe in this place that while M. D'Haussez was Prefect at Bordeaux, he was distinguished by kindness and hospitality towards our countrymen; and men of the most varied and opposite political sentiments allow him to have been an active and enlightened prefect.

In 1829 M. D'Haussez was appointed to the Ministry of the Marine. Some idea may be formed of his activity while holding this important office, when it is stated that he was charged with the whole of the preparations for the expedition to Algiers. In a few months he assembled, in the Roads of Toulon, a fleet of more than a hundred ships of war, and six or seven hundred transports. It is generally known in France that to the un-

aided energy of the Minister of Marine the conquest of Algiers was mainly owing: the French navy did not very willingly enter on the task.

The events of July, on which it is not necessary to dwell at length, compelled M. D'Haussez to fly his native country. Thanks to his presence of mind, and to the courage of a friend, he escaped the fortress of Ham.

Upon his arrival in England, Baron D'Haussez sought to divert the tedium of exile by literary composition, which had been always familiar to him; and these pages, as well as certain Memoirs, relating to events in which he has borne a part, are the results of his labours.

These Sketches of England were composed after an experience of three years' residence. They are certainly written in a *free* — it is for the public to say whether in a *fair*, spirit. The object of Baron D'Haussez appears to be to speak the truth honestly as

regards the Institutions, Customs, and Manners of England; to avoid servility on the one hand, and on the other to steer clear of intemperate abuse.

London, *June* 1833.

PREFACE.

BROUGHT to the shores of England by the force of circumstances to which my will was subservient, it became my anxious care to profit from the time I should have to reside in that country, by studying its manners, its customs, and its institutions. Thanks to the benevolent disposition which the English are wont to display towards foreigners, to that innate and exclusive curiosity which rivets itself to every object, living or inanimate, out of the common sphere, their eagerness to become acquainted with those who have played a conspicuous part in human affairs, I have to record to their praise, the testimonies of

interest which I received at their hands, and which have converted my esteem into a feeling of attachment. My exile has thus assumed the appearance of a visit, and my proscription gave me a title to their confidence and marked attentions.

An alternate state of frequent intercourse with a numerous and distinguished society, apparently not unwilling to yield a free range to my remarks, and of absolute retirement, tended alike to give me the command of the most valuable materials, and of the leisure and solitude so indispensable for arranging and acquiring a thorough knowledge of them. To this varied occupation I devoted all my time. Availing myself of the advantageous position in which I was placed, in order to form a correct judgment of a people who have been in France the theme of exaggerated blame or censure, according to the dictates of pure caprice, I hope to have steered a course altogether free from both extremes. To those who, in their igno-

rance of England, or in their appreciation of it through the perverted medium of a conventional enthusiasm, affect to speak of that country in a language of ecstasy and admiration which no argument can shake,—to such the opinions I have uttered will doubtless appear fanciful or too rigorous. Others, again, will condemn them as too favourable, who tenaciously adhering to prejudices which should long since have been banished, and encouraging these prejudices by their infatuated blindness and hostility, disdain to acknowledge that there can exist anything noble, honourable, or of value, out of their own country, and beyond the sphere of those customs in the midst of which they have been reared. Such is the fate reserved to impartiality; and I submit to it without complaint. If my observations are tinged with criticism, I may venture to declare that they never can assume a character of personality or of calumny. It will be gratifying to me to bestow praise on what may appear deserving

of it. If occasionally called upon to use the language of censure, I shall never give utterance to expressions which might call in question the attachment I so unfeignedly entertain for the English nation, in return for the noble and generous hospitality of which I have been the object during my residence in England.

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SKETCHES

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

LONDON.

Few foreigners land in England without being impressed with the conviction that a difference, manifested almost at every instant, exists between her manners and customs and those of other countries, and, above all, those of France—a difference which should be the subject of surprise and study; and that one is met at every instant by a sentiment of national superiority to which one is obliged to yield. After a little this opinion disappears: one sees that the costumes of all classes of society differ in nothing from those of the Continent—that the mode of address is the same,

though in a certain degree less courteous; and that there exists not much more difference in the hotels, or in the prices which they demand. The comparison between England and the Continent ceases when one examines the roads and carriages: in this respect all is admirable, in reference to appearance or convenience, and it must unhesitatingly be admitted that in these matters England enjoys an immense superiority.

The country from the sea-coast to London has the aspect of the greater part of the maritime provinces of France; meadows, fields surrounded by ditches surmounted by hedges. The farm-houses and dependent buildings have nothing which distinguishes them from buildings of a like nature on the Continent; the only difference one perceives is, that in England there prevail more neatness and order: the cottages, which are dwellings inhabited by people of very small means, are numerous and of an agreeable aspect; their fantastical architecture is covered over, if one may so say, with a fringe of flowers or of ivy, which the English employ with much taste.

You occasionally obtain a faint view of mansions situated in the midst of extensive parks and plantations of trees.

The small towns that you pass through, from the irregularity with which they are planned, and from the fact of the houses being situate on the very borders of the road, or some few feet from it, with gardens or a patch of green before the door, have, in truth, the appearance of large villages. No public promenade, nothing, in a word, which on the continent gives to a collection of houses the character of a town, presents itself to the eye of a traveller. Something vague and confused, which one cannot account for—a species of foggy envelope of vast extent, across which you think you can distinguish objects of a conical form, then an imposing mass which crowns the whole of this vaporous picture, fixes the attention of the stranger — it is London, with its sombre and smoky sky, its numerous steeples, and its majestic St. Paul's. None of the long avenues, the imposing luxury of the approaches to continental towns—none of those magnificent, yet often impracticable

roads which conduct you to them: the only indications of a rich metropolis are handsome houses separated from each other by gardens, diminishing in extent as you approach, and disappearing to make way for the houses which form the suburbs of London;—winding roads of unequal breadth, but bounded on either side by commodious *trottoirs* kept in admirable order, and filled with carriages of all kinds and fashions, circulating with inconceivable rapidity. At last you have reached London.

Here are new subjects of wonder, for everything is presented under a different aspect from anything in France which could form a subject of comparison. In London there is a crowd without confusion — a bustle without noise—immensity with an absence of grandeur. One sees large streets ornamented with *trottoirs*, paved with slabs of stone. These are separated by iron railings from brick houses two stories high, devoid of style, symmetry, or aught that resembles architecture. Some compensation is afforded for all that is wanting in art by the existence of squares whose centre presents a garden embellished by sta-

tues, flowers, and green sward, with the additional ornament of fine trees.

Here, also, are numerous bridges, two of which rival the most magnificent works of the kind; docks in which are sheltered thousands of vessels with the rich freights they are to transport; churches with colonnaded porticos, and steeples more remarkable by their fantastic form and the boldness of their elevation than by their elegance. Few of the public buildings are distinguished from private habitations; but everything partakes of the animation imparted by the movement of a numerous, active, and busy population.

In the evening, the scene changes: disengaged from the crowd of actors, it is illuminated by a row of gas-lamps ranged on either side of the streets. The beholder, in following their astonishing developement, which throws into the shade the dark façades of the houses that line them, might fancy himself in the midst of the vast avenues of a palace lighted up on the occasion of some great event.

The Parks are within the limits of this great

city, or of its suburbs; their chief attractions are a copious supply of water, and trees the growth of centuries: they offer the additional advantages of a road for carriages and horses, and of walks on the green turf for pedestrians. The prospect from them is varied by the number and diversity of the surrounding houses, and by the picturesque disposal of massy clumps of trees scattered here and there by chance, rather than by design.

In the more recently built parts of London there is nothing imposing but the breadth and handsome proportions of its streets; and in the city, nothing but its immense population and the impress of life which commerce imparts to it. With the exception of the churches, whose style, whether Greek or Gothic, is tolerably pure, few buildings fix the attention of a stranger; but a great number may surprise him into admiration by the profusion or the singularity of their ornaments, or by the beauty of their site. To this cause, and the irregularity in the line of buildings, is chiefly owing the effect produced by the houses in Pall-Mall, Waterloo Place, Regent Street, and

Regent's Park. So much pains have been taken to reproduce the ancient style of architecture, that one might fancy oneself in an ancient Greek or Roman city: there is not a house which has not a monumental character. The slightest examination reveals the numerous imperfections, the glaring faults of imitation without taste, without reason, and at variance with the commonest rules of art. The only object in studying such an architecture would be to record its defects and endeavour to avoid them. It is more pleasing to consider and enjoy it in its general effect, without minutely examining the impression it produces.

Among the public buildings to be excepted from this rigorous censure are Somerset House, the New Post Office, the Orphan Asylum, Newgate, the Mansion House, the Bank, and, in a less elevated order, some Club-houses, such as the Union, the United Service, the Athenæum, and the Travellers'. Three of the theatres, the Opera, Covent Garden, and Drury Lane, are deserving of notice rather for their vast proportions than for their architecture. The Colosseum, which contains a panorama

of London, is a noble edifice: it has the appearance of being transported from the banks of the Tiber to those of the Thames.

St. James's can only be mentioned as a collection of brick houses piled together, without symmetry, without plan, and without effect; it is conventionally called a palace, because it is the dwelling of kings. Buckingham Palace, which is intended to be substituted to St. James's, appears to have been specially constructed to prove how many millions an architect may expend on a work of such extravagantly bad taste.

Westminster Hall, the seat of both Houses of Parliament, is an edifice in the semi-Gothic style, in which have been heaped together all the inconveniences of this kind of architecture, without any of its redeeming beauties.

There only remains of White-Hall that beautiful part forming the anti-chamber and hall through which Charles I. passed to the scaffold, to lay down the first kingly head which a tribunal of blood presented as a sacrifice to the delirium of a rebellious people.

It should appear, that inspired by the sight and study of Westminster and St. Paul's, the English architects have drawn from the sensations inspired by these sublime compositions the courage to repudiate the bad taste which is apparent in the other classes of building. Their churches offer in general much more matter for praise than for blame. Beauty of proportions, purity of style, situation, effect, all are here united. There are few churches which do not present, either in their *ensemble* or in their details useful subjects of study; and there are many of them which may be cited as perfect models.

Not less remarkable for a character of graceful solidity and a justness of proportions than by the granite exclusively used in their construction, Waterloo and London Bridges are among the most stupendous and the most beautiful monuments of hydraulic architecture of which a nation can boast. And if the bold enterprise of an under-water communication, destined to unite the eastern extremities of Southwark and of the City, can be completed, Lon-

don will be in possession of the most surprising work of its kind which art has ever produced.

The vast basins known by the name of Docks, wherein are classed, according to their destination, those vessels which carry on the commerce of the universe, together with their cargoes, prove what a combination of wealth and talent may effect. Nothing is more calculated to convey a just idea of the commercial prosperity of England than these establishments.

Many of the squares are decorated with bronze statues, whose feeble effect is impaired, and whose merit it would be difficult to appreciate, incrusted over as they are with thick coats of black smoke, which not only obliterates the sculptural details, but spoils everything else in London. But, to judge them as they are, these productions do not give a favourable opinion of the talent of English sculptors. St. Paul's and Westminster contain several works of better execution; but there are few even of these which can be classed among the *chefs d'œuvres* of the art.

The hospitals of London are numerous; two

among them, Bedlam and the London hospital, are alone remarkable for their architecture; the rest are but large private houses applied to this service.

Among the prisons, the Penitentiary (the costly experiment of system-mongers and benevolent theorists who seek the improvement of the physical and moral condition of the prisoners,) deserves an attentive examination, from which one may draw useful results. Here, in observing all that has been done, we may study all that should be avoided.

The aspect of the Thames claims in its turn the observer's attention. No river ever bore on its bosom a greater number of vessels, or lent its aid to a more active navigation. It presents the most animated *coup d'œil;* it is a water city, with its streets, its lines, its quarters, its hospitals, its churches, its population, its manners, its customs, its laws. Nothing but a sight of the Thames can give one an idea of it. But where is this view to be obtained? Commerce has seized on both banks; she has even encroached on the very bed of the river to build her establishments, reserving to herself

but winding and narrow ways to transport thither all sorts of merchandise. It is only through the balustrades forming the parapets of the bridges, or from the gliding barks that plough the waters, that one can seize the *ensemble* of a perspective which is *unique* in the world, holding admiration in continual exercise without exhausting it.

One is often tempted to ask, not if there is a police in London, (its agents clad in a blue uniform with numbered collars, scattered everywhere night and day, would render that question superfluous,) but what the police does, so little attention is paid to its details—so great is its seeming negligence, in order not to appear over-meddling: certain it is, however, that the interference of the police is not visible in the cleanliness of the streets, nor in the indication of their names (for the names are wanting at the end of most streets,) nor in the passing to and fro of carriages which are drawn up *pêle mêle* at the entrance of all public places, according to the irresponsible caprice of their drivers. It often happens, in consequence of this confusion, that vehicles of all sorts become

locked together; this gives rise to a reciprocation of abuse and blows; nor is the interference of the police here apparent as regards animals which, in being driven on market-days from one end of the town to the other, occasion frequent obstructions and often serious accidents. A certain class of women too, in spite of English modesty, exercise their shameless calling in a most brazen manner, unchecked by the police; neither do they abate those nuisances of stalls, dangerous to the health and safety of the public; nor bestow their attention on an infinity of objects which in other countries claim and deserve the attention of this part of the Municipal Administration. In England, trifles like these are disregarded, and interference is limited to matters of more importance. On the other hand, there are few capitals where robberies are more infrequent, where robbers are so soon discovered and punished, or where popular movements (brought about generally, it is true, by a populace without courage, and unaccustomed to the use of fire-arms) are sooner repressed; where there are fewer disastrous occurrences; fewer col-

lisions between the different classes of society; or where all these results are obtained with so little constraint, vexation, and noise.

In this rapid summary I do not pretend to make the traveller acquainted with London; I describe it such as it presents itself to his examination on first passing through its streets. I limit myself to explain the first impressions which it produced on my own mind. It is, in fine, a bird's-eye-view, the details of which will be developed as we go along.

The environs of London afford at every step the clearest indications of prosperity. The number and outward appearance of the country-houses, the wealth and extent of the villages, and the activity of the population, answer to the idea that one has formed of the importance of this capital. Windsor, with its Gothic castle, its parks, and its beautiful site—Kew, with its gardens,—Hampton Court, with its parks, its fine trees, and invaluable collection of pictures—Richmond, with its picturesque sites and abundant vegetation, present to the indolent native as well as to strangers objects and pretexts for highly interesting ex-

cursions. Chelsea, Greenwich, Woolwich, and Chatham, on the other hand, have attractions for those whose graver thoughts seek useful instruction in the study of monuments and establishments destined to create and maintain the power of nations.

DINNER.

To judge of the English by the simplicity of their *cuisine*, one might be disposed to think that they deny to the taste those gratifications which they accord to the other senses. I know not whence arises that strange delicacy which prevents people from avowing that they find a pleasure in tasting well-cooked dishes, while at the same time they vaunt their capability of being able to appreciate a pleasing melody, a handsome object, sweet perfumes, and the numerous enjoyments tributary to the sense of feeling.

Without taste, the organization of man would be imperfect. To refuse to this sense the means of accomplishing its full gratification would be to counteract the wish of Nature,

which in her infinite foresight has attached a pleasure to the gratification of each want. Such, however, is the dominion of a false susceptibility, that many people hesitate to admit that they attach any importance to the enjoyments of the table. For a long time the French language wanted an expression to render the idea of a man exercising with discernment the exquisite faculty of Taste, and until the word *gastronome* was invented, one was obliged to brand with the ignoble name of *gourmand* any one who sought more at his meals than to appease his hunger, or satisfy the cravings of his appetite.

To enjoy oneself at table is, in France, an axiom of good sense and good company. In England, on the contrary, to eat to live, seems to be the sole object; there the refinements of cookery are unknown. It is not, in a word, a science; neither does the succession in which dishes should be served appear to be studied. To cover a table with immense pieces, boiled or roasted, and to demolish them, in the confusion in which chance has placed them, appears to be the whole gas-

tronomic science of the country. The most ordinary seasoning of the English *cuisine* is a profusion of spices unsparingly thrown into the sauces. To correct the effect of this, recourse is had to the insipid simplicity of plain-boiled vegetables, which continually circulate round the table, and with which the host would fain load the guest's plate. The meat is either boiled or roast. The fish is always boiled, and is served invariably with melted butter. The numerous transformations which the natives of the deep undergo before appearing on a French table are altogether unknown in England. Eggs are excluded from English dinner-tables, and even when produced at other meals, they are served in the shell; for the talent of making an omelette enters not into the education of an English cook. English fowls are of an indifferent quality; and game is subjected to a process of roasting which deprives it of all its flavour. The confectionary is badly made and without variety. The vegetables, condemned only to figure as correctives of a too exciting *cuisine*, do not appear upon the table. The *entremets* are limited

to a very scanty supply of creams and insipid jellies.

The following is the order in which an English dinner is served. The first course comprises two soups of different kinds; one highly peppery, in which float morsels of meat; the other a soup *à la Française*. They are placed at either extremity of the table, and helped by the master and mistress of the house. They are succeeded by a dish of fish, and by roast beef, of which the toughest part is served round. Where there is no *plateau*, a salad occupies the middle of the table. This course being removed, regular *entrées* are brought in, and the servants hand round dishes with divisions, containing vegetables. The course which follows is equivalent to the second course in France; but, prepared without taste, it is served confusedly. Each guest attacks (without offering to his neighbour) the dish before him.

The creams have often disappeared before the roast is thought of; which, ill carved, always comes cold to him who is to partake of it. The English carve on the dinner-table, and as,

before proceeding to this operation, each person is asked whether he wishes to taste of the dish or not, a considerable time is lost in fetching the plate of the person who accepts. A dinner never lasts less than two hours and a half or three hours, without including the time the gentlemen sit at table after the departure of the ladies. The salad appears again before the dessert, flanked by some plates of cheese. After the cloth is removed, dried and green fruit with biscuits are placed on the table. These compose the not very brilliant dessert. The serving up of the dinner, however, is the part about which the English give themselves the least trouble. Their table only presents an agreeable "*coup d'œil*" before dinner. It is then covered with the whitest linen, and a service of plate of greater variety, richer, and more resplendent than is to be seen in any other country.

The dessert served, conversation commences. The gentlemen lean their elbows on the table to converse more familiarly with their neighbours. The ladies draw on their gloves, and, in order not to soil them, eat the dessert with their

forks. Now drinking commences to some purpose. Up to this period, the guests have only, as it were, slaked their thirst with a few glasses of wine taken with each other.

It is a civility in England for one to take a glass of wine with you. On this occasion, you are begged to name what wine you choose. This proposition, which is not to be declined, imposes on you the necessity of drinking when others are thirsty. It is often renewed, without much real inconvenience, however, for those who do not wish to drink; for custom allows you merely to sip a little from the glass, which you seem to fill on each fresh challenge. Sometimes, between these frequent libations, but not commonly, a glass of beer is swallowed. This is not wonderful, for the strength of the English wines is more calculated to excite than allay thirst. The same want of regularity and system which is observable in the service of the dinner, exists in the distribution of the wine. The different species of wine succeed each other without regard to their respective qualities. To empty bottles and *wine-season* (*aviner*) the conversation, appears to be the only

object of the guests. England, accordingly, is as deficient in *gourmets* as in *gastronomes*.

At a signal given by the mistress of the house, the company rises, but only the ladies retire. The master of the house takes his plate and his glass, and places himself near the person he wishes to honour. The other guests draw nearer to each other, and then commences without interruption the circulation of four glass decanters, which each man, after helping himself, passes to his neighbour. Sometimes idle conversation springs up on this occasion; sometimes interesting political discussions, which, from the warmth of manner and the force of argument, exhibited, are not unlike those parliamentary discussions, of which they may be often considered as the rehearsals. Local interests are sometimes talked of, and above all hunting and coursing, which are in England important affairs. Presently the conversation becomes more animated, is carried on across the table, and grows confused and noisy. After three quarters of an hour or an hour, they are interrupted by the announcement of coffee; but instantly after this an-

nouncement, the conversation is resumed; nor does it cease till all the subjects under discussion are exhausted.

At length, the gentlemen quit the dinner-table, and go to join the ladies, who are found round the tea-table, or occupied in turning over a collection of caricatures. Coffee, which has been poured out since the moment of its announcement, and consequently cold, awaits the guests, who in general take but a little, preferring two or three cups of very strong tea. The party is prolonged till twelve or one o'clock.

There are many exceptions to the state of things I have been describing. In many houses there are French cooks; but the dinners which they send up are neither appreciated nor remarked. In order that the arts may spring up in a country, something more than artists is necessary; it is essential also to have connoisseurs; and if England, in cookery as in music, borrows her professors from foreign lands, she will never obtain either a national *cuisine* or a national music.

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

TEN o'clock has already struck: the ladies, who have been more than an hour in the drawing-room, await, round the tea-table, the end of the conversation which is still prolonged in the dining-room. Some strangers arrive; shake the hand of the mistress of the house, and exhibit a like politeness to such of the ladies present as they are acquainted with. They group themselves afterwards round the fire-place, to chat together if they are intimate, or if they have been introduced; that is to say, if their names have been interchanged by the friendly agency of a third person. Without this formality, custom does not sanction any intercourse between strangers. The dinner-guests enter the drawing-room

one after another: they approach the ladies; they take coffee or tea, and sometimes *liqueurs;* they then form groups, and return to the eternal subject of politics, always, it must be admitted, discussed without violence or warmth, and with much forbearance towards opposite opinions. Some form parties to play at cards. Others approach the piano to hear a *sonata* coldly executed; or romances sung by voices often agreeable, but rarely animated: for in England music is not a passion nor even a taste. It is but an affair of *ton* and *convenance,* a means of killing time. Some of the ladies range themselves round a table covered with knick-knacks, which are passed from hand to hand with a lazy curiosity, and have no other merit than their exorbitant cost. How much better had the money squandered on them been applied to the purchase of clocks, wanting in all the English apartments, or to a more elegant species of furniture than that covered with printed calico, which one sees in the greater part of the best furnished *salons* of the capital.

Albums, chiefly composed of engravings and

coloured lithographs, as well as caricatures, are turned over, till the moment when the sated appetite is again stimulated by the display of cold meats, confectionary, and fruits in an adjoining room. Sometimes the sound of the piano provokes a country-dance, wherein figure those pretty persons who have at last borrowed from France the graces which have always distinguished her dancers.

The dress of English women differs very little from that of the French. Some additions of finery, some jewels of an equivocal taste, alone protest against the invasion of our fashions; but these exceptions cause the elegant *recherche* of the toilet, which distinguishes the ladies of the higher ranks of society to be more highly appreciated.

An English salon presents in its *ensemble* and arrangement a *coup d'œil* quite different from a French one, and without partiality it may be averred that the comparison is quite in favour of the latter. The cause of this is owing to the grouping and incongruity of the English furniture; you seldom see the furniture of an English room uniform, rarer still is it to

find it ranged in order. Among a dozen chairs and *fauteuils* there are not two alike in height, size, and destination. The greater part of them are so low, that one falls down rather than sits: and a disagreeable effort is necessary to rise from this position. The posture of the body is accordingly ungraceful, and it provokes a negligence of manner which extends into the usages of society. A disuse of those immense and heavy *fauteuils*, which appear calculated to produce sleep rather than conversation, and the substitution of furniture better adapted to elegant society, would be a step made towards a nobler carriage. The distinctions heretofore established by the hierarchy of ranks are now hardly remarked. It is only in set parties that pretensions of this kind can be gratified; in the ordinary intercourse of English life they are not remarked.

French is spoken with much grace, and with evident complaisance towards foreigners, in almost all distinguished families. The English ladies, above all, speak it as their maternal language. There is one English custom which makes a disagreeable impression upon a stran-

ger on his admission to English society. He is not conducted down-stairs; the master of the house, who scarcely comes forward to receive him when he enters, dispenses with the ceremony of accompanying him when he withdraws. English politeness confines its duties on this occasion to a pull of the bell, as a notice to the servant who is entrusted with the duty of doing the honours of the ante-chamber. In a word, if the salons of London present less gaiety, noise, and bustle, than those of Paris, they exhibit a higher degree of courtesy towards social superiorities, and particularly towards foreigners, who are received with cordiality and treated with distinction.

A BALL.

GREAT importance is attached to a ball in England; a long time before it takes place the newspapers announce it, and they entertain their readers with it after it is over. No detail escapes them, and the most pompous terms are employed to describe the most uninteresting circumstances—"Lady N." say they, "gave on such a day, at her magnificent mansion in Berkeley Square, one of the most brilliant balls we remember to have witnessed. Her ladyship's long suite of superbly-furnished apartments were thrown open on this occasion. In one of the rooms, the choicest refreshments were served with a profusion which did honour to the generosity and good taste of the noble hostess. The guests began to arrive

at ten o'clock; at eleven o'clock the salons were full. An hour elapsed ere the curiosity of the assembly had sated itself in admiring the splendour of the decorations. At length Collinet's band was heard, and a great part of the company flocked towards the ball-room.

"The seductive Miss ——, wearing in her hair a garland of roses, and dressed in white satin; the graceful Miss Helen ——, in a robe of scarlet crape; the exquisitely-shaped Miss Adelaide ——, in a robe of black satin, and the lofty Lady ——, in a robe *lamée*, in silver and gold, opened the ball with Lord ——, Lord ———, Sir William ———, and Sir ———.

"A splendid supper, consisting of every delicacy of the season, succeeded the refreshments served during the country-dances. At four o'clock in the morning the company separated, deeply impressed with the graceful reception and refined politeness of the lady of the mansion, and the hospitality of her noble husband."

To this account of a ball, at which I was present, extracted from the principal London

newspapers, to which it had been officially sent, I will append a faithful recital of what I witnessed.

The house in which the *fête* was given, though handsome enough for an English mansion, was, nevertheless, of moderate size: by comparing its extent with the number of persons invited, it was obvious that (as at most of the London *fêtes*) space was really wanting.

The receiving-room was divided by a sliding partition, which was removed for the occasion. Two lustres, lighted with about fifty wax-candles, and reflected by handsome mirrors, contrasted disadvantageously with the deep red drapery of the salon. Some vases of flowers lined the foot and angle of a staircase, which two people could scarcely ascend abreast.

Having made my appearance at half-past ten o'clock, I found the master and mistress of the house alone, seated near the principal door of the *salon* awaiting the company, which did not arrive till eleven. Twenty large *fauteuils* and two sofas placed perpendicularly to the chimney, and in a very inconvenient position, were soon occupied. Two

hundred ladies, detained at home by the tyranny of *bon ton* in all the *ennui* of a domestic fire-side till twelve o'clock, now filled the two *salons*. Beyond, was a small room, whose originally narrow dimensions were still further reduced by a table covered with caricatures, albums, and knick-knacks. This room communicated with a small ante-chamber, and led into a gallery crowning the staircase, on the steps of which the last comers ranged themselves in couples.

At twelve o'clock the ball-room was thrown open. For a few minutes the other rooms were freed of the unpleasant crowd; but the respite was of short duration, for the carriages which every moment continued to set down fresh company in a ratio disproportioned to the extent of the apartments, obliged, at length, a part of the assembly to take refuge in the hall, which was quietly abandoned by the servants, these latter establishing their head-quarters on the steps outside the door. To move was now impossible for those who had not the strength to use their elbows, or the

courage to leave a portion of their dress in the midst of the crowd.

The supper-room was thronged with people who could not make their way out: they who, dying with thirst, in vain attempted to enter this apartment, accused those within of immoderate appetite.

In the ball-room there was the same crowding, the same suffocation, with this additional difference, that the male dancers opposed to the approach of the crowd effective *coup de pieds*, and the ladies a certain portion of their person which shall be nameless. The orchestra was composed of a piano, a harp, violins, a violoncello, a trombone, and a key-organ, which mingled its sharp tones with those of the other instruments, and sometimes executed solos.

At three o'clock, such of the party as suffered most from suffocation, proceeded home. Two hours were consumed in getting up the equipages, owing to the confusion which reigned among them: at length, however, the owners entered their carriages, their dresses

which three or four hours before were so smart, now all discomposed; but there was the next day the consolation of reading in their morning papers of the pleasure one was supposed to have had at the ball, and those details of it which one could not have observed there.

A PRIVATE CONCERT

"WERE I not obliged to have recourse to my talents in order to exist," said L. B—— to me, "I should prefer ten thousand francs earned at Paris to fifty thousand in London. In France the arts are understood, and there they know how to class artists in the order of their respective talents: in England, however, they understand music as little as they know how to compose it. Noise, plenty of noise, is all that is necessary to ears which are content to hear, provided they are not obliged to listen."

L. B—— was chagrined when he thus addressed me; he had been singing: they had heard him, but they had not listened.

A few days after this conversation, I was

invited to another concert. There were about sixty ladies present, promiscuously seated. Their conversation, carried on in a loud voice, did not announce much inclination to listen to the music. A handsome person, rather strangely dressed, entered without being announced; four or five very young men followed her: they all placed themselves near the piano-forte. At the instant when conversation was most animated, the sound of a voice was heard, which, aided by the thumping on the instrument of the person who accompanied it, tried to raise itself above the tumult. People now began to talk louder. A concerted piece was not better received. This medley of voices talking, crying, singing, joined to the sounds of a discordant instrument and the clinking of teacups, produced the effects of the best organized *charivari*. Occasionally the singing ceased; then it commenced again, without these interruptions being at all remarked.

I was told that the *artistes* were pupils of the Royal School of Music; a species of forlorn hope, who are put forward on these occasions, to encounter the first effects of the

little sympathy felt by the English for music, and who would soon make way for *virtuosi* likely to claim more attention. Presently a thick-set man, with a counter-tenor voice, sat down to the piano; then another large man, with a faint treble; then a tall woman, who, opening her mouth with an unpleasant grimace, afforded a wide passage for a voice really well suited to an inattentive auditory.

Some pretended amateurs approached the musicians; but it was only for the purpose of talking more at their ease than in the more crowded part of the room, where the noise was too deafening. These people seemed to think that their presence alone (for attention they bestowed none), exhibited an unequivocal desire to be thought *amateurs* and courteous towards the *artistes*.

The performers, after executing some few more pieces, the merit of which was altogether lost, retired, recompensed by the money they received for the cold reception given to their musical efforts. Their exit appeared to cause as little sensation as their singing, and the merit of the concert will have been appropriated only in exact proportion to its cost.

AN EVENING AT VAUXHALL.

THE English people have yet to complete their education in respect to public amusements. They seem to think that it is enough to be spectators at public places. All other species of participation, all that enthusiasm which communicates its pleasure from one to another, must not be looked for. The real lovers of art are necessarily few in a crowd, composed chiefly of people who go to theatres and public places, for the purpose of occasionally breaking in on the monotony of their habits. John Bull shows himself silent, grave, heavy on these occasions; he does not dance: he is quite satisfied with appearing at places to which his curiosity is attracted.

Vauxhall is the most celebrated garden in England for evening amusements, yet the

divertissements exhibit little variety. A noisy orchestra, musicians in grotesque dresses, grimace-makers, optical illusions; porter, fowl, and salad; brilliant illuminations, and sometimes ingenious fire-works; these are the attractions which Vauxhall holds forth. When one has walked here till one is completely tired, eaten to perfect satiety, and drunk in proportion, one returns home with the gravity of demeanour of monks quitting their chapels to repair to their cells.

The two classes of society which, in Paris, give *éclat* and *piquancy* to these meetings are wanting in London. The "*beau monde*" disdains them, and the *bourgeoisie* cannot frequent them on account of the expense. Add to that, this Sunday in England not being devoted to those diversions to which a part of that day is devoted in other countries, the English *bourgeoisie* would be obliged to give to Vauxhall the time required either for labour or repose. Besides, it would be necessary to dress better on these occasions than the English tradesman is accustomed to do on a week day.

Nothing, therefore, is more *triste* than the long corridors of Vauxhall, notwithstanding the thousands of small lamps with which they are lighted, and the hundreds of tables, on each of which a cold fowl is placed to tempt the ever ready appetite of the visiters. Neither the singers, who make themselves hoarse by dint of bawling, from the balustrade of a Chinese temple, for a public which hears them not; nor the ventriloquists; nor the imitators of birds and beasts; nor mills turned by a cascade in this corner, nor a transparency in that, can give to these gardens a passing interest. In leaving them, one asks, why one went thither? And one is surprised that nothing has been reaped from the journey, but a lighter pocket and heavier limbs, together with a plentiful crop of *ennui* and yawns, the heralds of a needed sleep to which the visitant is about to surrender himself.

FAMILY CONNEXIONS.

ENGLISH families are too numerous to be long knit together. It is a rare occurrence, indeed, if the affection of parents and relatives should spread itself over the numerous progeny of each house connected with them, and display that delicate care, that affectionate kindness, which is remarked in other countries. If these attentions are bestowed in infancy, they relax in a precise *ratio* with the development of bodily and mental faculties. As soon as an education fitting for the future career of a young man is given him, so that he may be enabled to provide for himself, he is trained to do without those parental cares. This is one of the reasons why a too numerous family causes so little anxiety to the parent, his paternal for-

tune being insufficient to secure to each of them an appropriate establishment. The family increases without the father giving himself any uneasiness as to what shall become of them. The eldest son will inherit the greater part, sometimes the whole, of the fortune, and will be charged with the duty, often faithfully fulfilled, of protecting the family. The other brothers follow a profession or some employment. An Englishman has all the world before him: independently of the lucrative employments at home — independently of the numberless sinecures which the Government offices, the army, and above all the Church, offer to the ambition and cupidity of powerful families, India presents assured fortunes not only to these, but to families of middle condition. The young men sent thither make their fortune or die, and thus the relations have nothing more to trouble themselves about. As to girls, all being by law excluded from the inheritance of the real estate, all have an equal chance of forming establishments. Happy they whom Nature has endowed with personal

charms,* or who belong to respectable families! (*à des maisons en crédit.*)

The second generation little engages the solicitude of relatives, who often are unacquainted with all the members of it. In support of this assertion, I will cite the following anecdotes, however improbable they may appear to French readers.

I arrived at a country mansion at the same time as one of the sons of my host. We found in the salon a family composed of the father, the mother, two young persons, and a child ten years old. We bowed to these strangers, and after some moments of silence, we opened the conversation by some commonplace remarks. A few moments afterwards, the host and hostess entered, embraced in an affectionate manner the lady who preceded us, shook hands with the husband, asked the names

* Beauty in England is most frequently preferred to fortune. The consideration of fortune, which in other countries balances the choice of men, and too often influences it, is avoided by the nature of the English laws as regards the rights of women. It is not impossible that this may have an effect on the physical perfection of the English race.

of the children, and were astonished to find them so tall and handsome. They then presented their son to the members of the strange family, telling him that these were his sister, his brother-in-law, two nieces and a nephew. An almost incredible story, yet a fact! The brother had never seen his sister, who was much older than himself, and he was totally unacquainted with his family. If he was aware of the name of his brother-in-law, it was as much as he knew. After this, let those sympathies produced by ties of blood be vaunted if you will.

"I should like to dance," said a young lady dressed in black, on hearing the violin of a village fiddler. "I should like to dance, but I dare not."

"For whom are you in mourning?" said I.

"For my eldest brother."

"Is he long dead?"

"A fortnight."

"That is very recent."

"Oh, but I had no great reason to love him; we did not know each other."

"He did not live in England, then?"

"Oh yes; but on his estate, far from Lon-

don, where he hardly ever came, and where I very rarely go. From my earliest infancy I have been brought up by an uncle, whom I never left, not even to visit my father's house. Thus it has happened that I have never once seen my brother, and I learn his death through the newspapers."

"If he returned, then, to this earth, he would not know you?"

"Impossible."

"In that case, then, you may dance.—That is just what I mean to do;—give me your hand,"—and in a moment we were on the floor of the ball-room.

A kind of social position, unknown in other countries, and the singularity of which is not even remarked here, is created in England by separations and divorces, and the second marriages entered into after those conjugal partings. The children, whose birth has preceded the divorce, maintain their social relations with their parents. Do they go to their father's house? They meet a step-mother. Does duty draw them towards their mother? They pay their respects to a father-in-law. They are

well received everywhere — they put up with everything — nothing astonishes or afflicts them. One would be tempted, indeed, to believe that they rejoice in an event which has doubled the objects of their affections, owing to the friendly intercourse and kindness interchanged between them and those new relatives given to them by the disunion of their families.

MARRIAGE.

"MARRIAGE," says Figaro, "is the drôllest of all serious matters." A witticism which was not without its truth in Paris at the epoch at which Beaumarchais wrote is without point in London. There are few things which are allied to drollery in an English marriage, and nothing which gives rise to gaiety. Elsewhere, marriage is a tie which joins if it does not completely unite, two beings who have agreed to pass their lives together. In England it is a chain which binds one's movements, one's wishes, even one's thoughts. There is no country in the world where more attention is bestowed on the subject of marriage, with more satisfactory results.

Youth is already passed before people in England think of entering into this state. Few men think of marrying before thirty, and few women before twenty-two or twenty-four. This is the most suitable age, because the heyday of the passions is over, and the character is formed, without the habits having become fixed. Marriage is not, as in France, an affair of *convenience*, of condition and fortune, of love and *etourderie*. The parties study each other's character, and scrutinize each other's tastes. Should this first scrutiny prove favourable, an intimacy commences, and it is after this only that formal overtures are made. These overtures once accepted by the family, the intended is already considered as united to the person whom he is to marry. He sees her on all occasions, and alone; he goes out with her, while she presides over the arrangement of their projected household, and occupies herself with a future which is not yet guaranteed by any irrevocable engagement.

This state of things, which permits no shade of character, no quality, no defect, to escape the observation of either party, lasts several

months, and the engagement is only rendered binding when the certainty of a reciprocal good understanding is no longer a matter of doubt.

The happiest experience of its effects attests the advantages of a proceeding chalked out by the plainest reason and good sense. English marriages, notwithstanding the restrictions they carry along with them, the privations they impose, the rigorous duties which they exact as a law, are in general productive of happiness. Husbands may dispense with the necessity of exhibiting themselves as jealous, tyrannical or exacting, in all that relates to their honour and dignity. Custom has in this case provided against every contingency; and custom exhibits a greater severity than husbands themselves could decently do. As the men command without tyranny, the women obey without reluctance. On the part of the one and the other, it is an affair of custom and manners. The rule is uniform; that which happens in one house happens in all others. In none is therefore found any lively pleasure; but as the parties did not count on this, it is not a matter

of chagrin. They live without emotions, it is true, but this very calm is in itself a happiness.

When the question has been well examined, it may be asserted, thanks to the influence of custom and manners in England, that the marriage state is a happier one in that country than it is in any other.

All marriages are not however made with that maturity of reflection, and those wise precautions, which so much contribute to the happiness of the conjugal state. Sometimes a hasty and impetuous passion, in opposition to the wishes of relations and the usages of society, terminates in a runaway marriage. In order to get rid of difficulties, the parties, in this case, proceed to Gretna Green. What is Gretna Green? It is a village on the frontiers of Scotland, where, in virtue of I know not what custom, a family of blacksmiths have had, for a series of generations, the privilege of legally marrying people in that locality, who wish not to be subjected to the marriage-laws prevailing in their own country. At Gretna Green no preparatory acts, no consent of parents, is necessary. No enquiries are made; no obstacles present

themselves. You appear before the blacksmith; you declare your wish to unite yourself with such a person, and straightway you are married. All that is necessary, is to reach the spot called Gretna Green. But herein lies all the difficulty; the road from London to Gretna Green is a species of race-course, on which the lovers, who fly the pursuit of father and brothers, put to the test the speed of post-horses. The first-named have in general the start by some hours; but when one is in love, one cannot always fly. One must stop to speak more at leisure concerning one's happiness, one's projects, one's dreams; one thinks not of pressing the paces of the horses; and the father, who is pre-occupied with nothing but the matter in hand, who pays the postilions handsomely, gains ground on the fugitives, at length overtakes them, dispatches after the lover a police-officer (with one of which fraternity it is usual on such occasions to be accompanied, were it only to beguile the tediousness of the road,) seizes his daughter, and, without paying the least attention to her tears and cries, forces her into his carriage, and drives off, whilst his travelling companion,

(the police officer) goes fisty-cuffs with the abducer. The parties in the end return home, each to his respective domicile, and it ordinarily happens, and for the best reasons, that a marriage on the point of being contracted in the shop of a blacksmith is celebrated with pomp in the parish church.

It is by no means an uncommon occurrence, to see men of the very first rank seeking wives behind the scenes of a theatre, and, under the protection of their titles, introducing them from the stage into the presence of royalty. The rigidity of English manners is at first startled; but, in the end, people yield on these points. A few years of staid and regular conduct cause less favourable antecedents to be forgotten; and the ex-actress, having now become a marchioness or duchess, soon numbers in her *salons* all that patrician pride accounts most stately and high-bred, and all that morality reckons as most rigidly severe.

Now and then it happens, that a man seduces the wife of his friend. The friend is angry thereat, as is natural. In France, in such a case, there would be a duel; here there is a

law-suit. Instead of a ball through the body or a sword-thrust, the husband obtains an award of some thousands of pounds sterling, as a compensation for the loss of his wife. By the same judgment he is rid of his guilty partner,* and she becomes the wife of her seducer; often exhibiting, in her new position, a rigour of principles and a regularity of conduct, of which her past life gave no promise. Morality is thus made to harmonize with private feelings.

It is now observed, that abductions, which were very frequent some years ago, become each year of rarer occurrence. Shall we seek the cause of this in improved manners, or ascribe it to a progress in immorality? Opinions are very much divided on this subject, and I shall not declare mine.

* The author mistakes a point of our law. Damages afford a ground for proceeding to obtain a divorce; but damages had in an action for criminal conversation, unless ulterior proceedings be taken, in no degree dissolve a marriage.—TRANSLATOR.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

One of the most commonly vaunted pretensions of English society is that of thoroughly knowing the interests and the people of other countries. From this to absolute judgments there is but a step, and that step is so rapidly taken that reflection has not time to intervene. It is to be regretted, that the gravity which the English carry to the consideration of other subjects, on which they exercise their good sense, abandons them on these occasions; more especially, when one hears them put forth such fallacious opinions regarding men and things, mistake facts so strangely, give implicit belief to such contemptible authorities, and exhibit so little discernment and spirit of enquiry when examining the considerations on which they

form their judgment. Cautious and sensible in all that touches the interests of their own country, they are rash and inconsiderate in all that concerns other nations. And nevertheless, they are in a better position than any other people to avoid these freaks of judgment. They travel much, visit every thing, question on all occasions, write copious notes. One is tempted to ask, why take so much trouble and fatigue to carry back incorrect accounts? Why observe so much, and after all see so ill? Hasty as they are in their opinions and judgments on the political affairs of other nations; prejudiced as they are towards those who figure therein; disposed to interfere, as they must be admitted to be, not only with their purse, but their persons, in quarrels with which they have no concern; the English nevertheless allow a stranger, with manifest reluctance, to form an opinion of what passes in England. Among the politest Englishmen, an unequivocal impatience is exhibited; and those who are less courteous, take no pains to dissemble their feelings. Nobody could find fault with the English, if they exhibited towards other nations the re-

serve which they exact from strangers in speaking of their own.

The English proclaim themselves the friends of liberty and the enemies of despotism: in England, love of country is a worship. Enter their houses, you shall every where see the bust or portrait of Napoleon. Do they perceive in the character of this extraordinary man a favourable leaning towards liberal ideas, hatred of despotism, some faint inclination to prefer the interests of Great Britain to those of France? This is hardly possible. Should not one rather seek the cause of this infatuation in a leaning towards opinions and things which are out of the common line? In this case one must either sacrifice the patriotism or the good sense of the English; and I do not hesitate to pronounce in favour of their patriotism.

There is this peculiarity in the English character, that the defects of individuals and classes, far from militating against the general interest, operate rather in its favour. Thus,

from the want of courage in the common people results the maintenance of order; from the pride of the better classes, national pride; from the thirst after riches, public wealth; from the sluggishness of imagination, the hatred of change and consequent stability of institutions; from the mania to distinguish oneself, strange but useful institutions; from the severity of the religion, a severity of manners; from a spirit of propagandism, the extension of English commerce in all quarters of the globe; from the distress of the parent state, the establishment of useful colonies; from the sale of public places, even of seats in the national representation, more aptitude and stronger guarantees on the part of those who devote their fortune to the pursuit of such objects; from the revolting inequality in the division of property, a hierarchy which connects the state and private individuals in a common bond of union.

This disposition of the social order, taken in its general sense, re-acts upon all the minor details; and the effect of it is that, notwithstanding the inconsistencies discoverable in its

institutions, and the real and obvious defectiveness of its organization, England holds a very distinguished rank amongst the best governed and the most flourishing nations of the present day; and that, so far as they go back, all its historical recollections must, on a comparison with other countries, redound to its advantage.

Duels are of rare occurrence in England. The calm tone in which the English carry on their discussions—their habitual coldness of disposition—the absence of susceptibility, even as respects certain words, which, however offensive in other languages, have no meaning in theirs—the extreme severity of the law, which, when a duel has been attended with death, subjects the victor to the fate of the vanquished—the stigma which attaches alike to duelling and duellists, these circumstances limit to a very few cases the necessity of seeking redress for injuries by an appeal to personal courage or skill. Instead of fighting, recourse is had to law, and this mode of settling differences is sanctioned by public opinion as the only natural one. Are we, then, to infer that the Eng-

lish are deficient in bravery because they sue for an award of pecuniary damages instead of giving a sword-thrust or firing a shot in return for a box on the ear? Assuredly not. British valour is admitted on all hands, and the praises universally bestowed upon them are borne out by their glorious deeds. The courage we speak of is less common than it is in France: it displays itself in a manner and according to rules peculiarly English; but it is quite as solid, and may prove quite as beneficial to the state, as the courage of any other nation.

The English have a custom of showing every thing: when they undertake the task of gratifying a stranger's curiosity, they overwhelm it, and are unsparing of the most minute and insignificant details. In a town, no part of it, however repulsive to the sight—no building, however wretched, escapes their zeal as ciceroni. In a house, they take you from the cellar to the garret, and draw your attention to everything it contains: there is no getting out of a library, a museum, or a collection of works of art; they make you open every book

in succession, examine the most insignificant painting, admire the object least worthy of attention. There is in this habit nothing open to serious criticism, and I mention it only as conveying to the mind the idea of a species of national *tic*.

There is a great difference between an Englishman on the Continent and an Englishman in London. Hence originates the erroneous opinion formed of the English on the other side of the Straits — an opinion founded on the defects as well as the virtues of their character. The fault of this error lies not in the judges, but in the judged: the former pronounce an opinion on what they see; the latter exhibit themselves in an assumed character, and this fictitious character is not so estimable as their natural one.

An Englishman abroad advertises, in a manner, his desire to preserve the customs of his country; he even exaggerates these, lest any of the details should escape: he pushes his prejudices even to this extent, that he wishes to bend the customs of every country he visits to those of England; he evinces susceptibility,

disdain, pride; he requires attention without making any effort to deserve it, and is everywhere at his ease. Does he enter a *salon*, he hardly bows to you—awaits an introduction (a usage foreign to every country except England), before he commences a conversation, and is offended at the least neglect of those observances of which he fancies he should be the object. The crowd should, in his idea, pack itself tighter in order to give a free passage to himself, his wife, and three or four daughters, who hang upon him, and would not for the world be separated. He is inexorable on the point of conceding the smallest English custom, lest it should tend to impeach that nationality of which he is so proud.

An Englishman at home is quite a different being: prejudiced in favour of strangers, he lays himself out to please them by adopting their manners and their language, and exaggerating the advantages of both. On these occasions he divests himself altogether of his national habits, to sympathise more fully with strangers, and exhibits a politeness, a courtesy, and a readiness to oblige, which the

person who had seen him out of his own country could form no idea of.

There is some radical vice either in the character, domestic organization, or customs of the English, for they are contented nowhere: they appear tormented by a rage of locomotion which drives them from town to country, from their native land to other countries—from their estates to the sea-side. It is a matter of little moment to them whether they shall be happier at this place than at that; their great object is, not to be to-morrow where they are to-day. The variety and amusement which other people seek in the exercise of their imagination, the English look for in a change of place: when they have exhausted land-journeys, they shut themselves up within the narrow wooden walls of a yacht —behold them exposed to the inconveniences and dangers of the sea, sailing about without definite end or purpose, unlimited as to time, without prospect of present or future enjoyment, and already looking forward to the end of that pleasure they are about to indulge in.

This mania is not confined to individuals;

it is common to a great number of families of all classes and ranks, and of various fortunes. Without speaking of Brighton, where, in subserviency to fashion, some of the winter months should be passed, (fatiguingly enough it must be admitted,) one sees on all the public roads numbers of families who quit commodious habitations, and all the *agrémens* attached to actual ownership, in order to establish themselves as lodgers in other countries, there to undergo all the miseries which result from non-possession. Customs, affections, habits, love of soil, everything is sacrificed, before an English family are informed what they shall find at their new abode; for their preference is not determined on any ground of reason, but suggested by the whim of the moment: people travel to Italy, to Saxony, to Scotland, to France, from one county to another, without any precise object in view.

On leaving England, families let their houses; and if the term is not expired on their return, they hire another house for a month, for a week, or for a year, as the case may be. When they find it inconvenient

to travel to any distance, they remove from one quarter of the town to another, rather than remain stationary.

A foreigner is tempted to ask whether that *comfort*, which is the Englishman's boast, is so general that he finds it wherever an unreflecting caprice may conduct him; and if, supposing it to exist in England, the English carry it with them to the Continent? Compelled to answer negatively, he asks if this "comfort" is, after all, so real and so extensive a blessing as the English pretend?—and, from question to question, he proceeds to doubt whether this *summum bonum* is really so valuable and necessary, sacrificed as it is so very lightly by the English themselves.

LIFE OF A FOREIGNER.

THERE are two indispensable conditions necessary to the foreigner who wishes to pass his time agreeably in London: plenty of money and a distinguished social position, a celebrity, or a name which stands in the place of it. He should prepare himself to pay very dearly for the hospitality which he is obliged to seek in furnished apartments, as well as for every article with which he has not had the prudence to provide himself. The comparatively dear price at which all consumable and other articles are sold, is still further enhanced to foreigners, by the established custom of charging them double for every thing. This is a custom observed in all countries, but in none is it so religiously followed as in England.

A foreigner should be pleased in English society, so much is he the object of delicate and unwearied kindness; so great are the efforts made to obtain his good opinion, in return for the services heaped upon him. The pleasure which he finds in society ought above all to be attributed to the English ladies, who, with a grace free from coquetry, a kindness without affectation, occupy themselves in doing the honours of the house. Almost all Englishwomen speak French with fluency, and they employ this language exclusively in conversations in which strangers take a part. They know how to show their learning without pedantry, and they have the talent to keep up a conversation, whatever be the turn it takes.

The men are colder, more reserved, more penetrated with their national dignity. Their politeness is neither apparent, nor engaging. One may say of it, indeed, that it consists in desiring to be asked for that which they ought to offer.

To the two conditions already mentioned, as indispensable towards an agreeable existence

in London, a third must be joined. It is a title; a qualification which precedes your name. You are then sought for, preached up, lionized. You become an object of curiosity, that is looked at, studied, and sometimes questioned to importunity....On a foreigner's complaisance in lending himself to this national habit depends the sort of reception he meets with. If you are in a condition to gratify it, you should not hesitate in complying, the more especially as, in consequence of the delicacy of the questioner, you can do so without any sacrifice of personal dignity. The English ladies are grateful for this obligingness and for the polite manners of strangers; their endeavours to justify these marks of attention prove that they are not insensible to them.

Possessed of the advantages we have laid down, one is sure to enjoy in England all the *agrémens* which can grace the life of a man of the world. But, if these advantages are wanting, you must fly a country where you are only considered in relation to the part you can play in it, or to that which you have played else-

where; however severe, however multiplied the privations which you impose on yourself, they are unable to contend against the enormity of the prices and the continual demands upon your purse.

ENGLISH FORTUNES.

THE extreme inequality in the distribution of all sorts of property in England can alone explain the marvellous wealth of some individuals. The effect of the law of primogeniture (securing, as it does, the greater part of the fortune to the eldest son) is to throw after a few generations the whole fee of the soil into a very few number of hands. The equality that might be produced by dissipation on the one hand; on the other, the chances of commercial speculation and the different circumstances which change the social position; can have no influence on the greater part of noble families, on account of the system of *majorats* and entails, which constitute the bases of real property, and ensure the maintenance of large fortunes.

This system of inequality must have advantages compensating for those disadvantages which common sense appears to point out; for here competency is general. The exceptions are not at all so numerous as those which afflict the observer in a country governed upon the system of an equal distribution of property.

Whilst the younger children, excluded from the division of the paternal property, obtain an advantageous position by the resources which a varied industry presents, the eldest maintain the splendour and augment the wealth of their house. They often employ their fortunes less according to the suggestions of their own will, than according to public opinion and irresistible custom. In truth they are but the stewards and dispensers of their revenues. The tendency to accumulation is prevented by their expensive pleasures, by the luxury and elegant style of their houses, by the necessity they labour under of keeping up their grounds, by the attention they are obliged to give to agriculture. The circulation of their capital is also promoted by the golden suffrages they buy of

electors, who send them or their relatives to parliament, thus perpetuating an influence which they are very eager to uphold. The sums expended on these occasions not only exhaust whatever savings may have been made, but often trench upon anticipated resources. Be this, however, as it may, this expenditure has a very remarkable effect, and in the actual state of society in Europe, one should consider the sway exercised by a large fortune and an illustrious name over interested or grateful dependents as a phenomenon worthy of remark.

For the middle classes, commerce and places in the colonies offer sure asylums; military and naval rank, and church preferment, with the rich emoluments thereto attached, offer to the elder branches of great families the means of nursing, or improving their private fortune. Honours obtained in these professions repair in some sort the unequal distribution of real property, and often raise up to eminence those of lowly fortune. Thus a brilliant lot awaits the elder branches, while an advantageous position is assured to the younger. The general

aspect of the country presents an orderly and satisfactory air which announces a real prosperity.

Viewed under the relative well-being of classes and individuals, England bears off the palm from the most favoured countries of the universe. In no kingdom does such a wide-spread competency prevail. To what are we to attribute this result, if not to the distribution of property.

If one took only into account the immensity of certain large fortunes, whose overgrown magnitude would seem to depend on the absolute poverty of a vast number of individuals, one would have some difficulty in discovering the secondary causes of this general prosperity. Of how many small fortunes are composed the colossal incomes of a Duke of B———, a Duke of B———h, of a Marquis of W———, of a Marquis of S———, whose rent-rolls vary from four to eight millions of francs? and those of a number of private individuals, who would consider themselves poor if their income did not amount to six or eight thousand pounds a-year, (one hundred and

fifty or two hundred thousand francs)? London, the city alone excepted, is the property of a dozen persons, upon whose ground the houses and squares are built. The ground-rent amounts to several times the revenue of the soil; and after a certain number of years, the houses revert to the ground-landlord. There are some individuals who possess two or three thousand, others five or six thousand houses. This kind of proprietorship exists in almost all towns which have increased of late.* It is an inexhaustible source of wealth for the proprietors.

The fortunes of corporate bodies are not less remarkable than those of private individuals. The universities of Cambridge and Oxford have property in land, which produces to each an annual income of many millions of francs.

The corporations of London, and those of the principal towns, possess in houses, lands, and public funds, immense properties. These are sufficiently well managed with a view to

* Devonport, which contains a population of forty thousand inhabitants, belongs to a single proprietor.

productiveness, but very ill managed, if one considers the application which is made of their produce. This may or may not increase the sum of general wealth. Everything depends on the caprice of those who happen for the time to be the managers, and on the conditions which they impose on the distribution and arrangement of the property.

Governed by a spirit of prudence, or by the routine of unreflecting habit, the English people have been content with this state of things. It is now wished to persuade John Bull, that he ought to consult common sense, or rather sound reason, and allow himself to be carried away by theories and changes, which would establish a more equal distribution of wealth. The bait is attractive. The mind must be powerfully seduced by all the considerations which present themselves in support of the new system, and above all, a system like this, which interests so many people. It is difficult to refrain from trying a remedy, which offers so many rich spoils. Let, however, the machinery of such a system be once put in action, and its consequences are irre-

sistible. That social order which exists at present will disappear, and who can say what shall occupy its place? Who can tell the extent of the sacrifices at the price of which it will be necessary to purchase the change.

The administration and expenditure of those fortunes of which I have been speaking would appear to require vast combinations, and a machinery not in harmony with the manners of the age. Were the possessor of an income of 160,000*l.* sterling to keep forty men-servants in his ante-chambers, one hundred horses in his stables, a sumptuous table, and a sporting establishment, he would appear to have attained the limits assigned to luxury, by the habits of our social state.

An inconsiderable part of such a fortune would suffice for these expenses, excessive as they appear; but the taste for improvements demands another portion of it. Roads and canals are made, palaces and *chateaux* are constructed, the proprietor gives himself up to the expensive mania of innovations and improvements; he wishes to become a member of parliament, and to bring in along with him, his relations

and dependents, and forty or fifty thousand pounds a year is devoted to these purposes. But this is not all; his estates must be looked to; and forty men are perhaps paid for the purpose of protecting his game. In order to avoid the inconvenience of being constantly attended by a numerous suite of domestics, a complete set remains at each establishment, although it sometimes happens that the proprietor only resides there for a few days in each year. An extravagance commanded by *bon ton*, and a prodigality to which ideas of grandeur and dignity are attached, dispose of the rest of his wealth. Such are the means adopted by people of large fortune in England in the disbursement of their wealth, which has the effect of producing a competence in all classes of society.

COUNTRY LIFE.

It is in their vast and magnificent chateaux in the country that the English display all their luxury. Here it is that the appointments of their servants, the profusion of their table, the beauty of their equipages, are in the highest degree remarkable. In the month of July, London is abandoned by that portion of society which piques itself on governing the fashion and giving the *ton*. The portion of London society which cannot afford to leave town assumes a species of *incognito*, goes out rarely, and receives no visits. In addition, they cause the front windows of their houses to be closed, so that nobody may suspect that they are still in London.

The first two months of sojourn at their country-seats the English consecrate to busi-

ness: they invite few strangers, and limit their visits to a few near neighbours. In the month of October visiting commences: a numerous host of visiters, with a numerous suite of servants and horses, fill the chateaux of the high nobility. Whilst affecting perfect freedom, and proclaiming absolute liberty, these country *réunions* are, nevertheless, remarkable for the minute observance of a rigorous etiquette. Each house is but a fraction of the court, with its customs, its laws, its pretensions.

An English day is much cut up by the frequency of meals. Tea is served at nine o'clock: at this meal nobody is waited for, hardly even the master of the house. When the clock strikes, the first comers place themselves round the table, make the tea, and help themselves unceremoniously to bread, butter, and eggs, of which the breakfast is composed. On a sideboard are placed cold meats: those who wish for a slice of meat, stand up, cut off a suitable portion, and return to their places. Neither wine, beer, nor water are served at this meal — one has only tea or coffee to quench one's thirst, for which one must fre-

quently ask the person officiating at the tea-table. Custom excludes the presence of servants; and the persons composing the company, generally occupied in reading the newspapers, or with their letters, do not think of supplying the want of servants by transmitting from hand to hand such things as others have need of.

Another meal unites the greater part of the company between one and two o'clock. Lunch is better managed than the breakfast, and is served as the *dejeuners à la fourchette* in France.

At six o'clock the company assembles in the drawing-room. The toilet of the men is expected to be made with great care: the ladies, dressed as for the most brilliant *soirées* of the capital, make a display of their diamonds, and of those dresses which they have received from London or Paris. In the ante-room, the servants are ranged in straight lines on either side. The master and mistress of the house occupy arm-chairs at either extremity of the table: the guests place themselves without affectation according to their respective ranks.

About twelve o'clock, a fourth and last repast, served on trays, is placed at the disposal of those whose stomachs are not contented with the repasts of the day. This last meal is composed of cold meat and broiled fowls, covered with a layer of cloves, pepper, capsicum, and salt. A few glasses of hot wine, or of Sherry or Madeira, facilitate the digestion of this last repast.

The intervals between meals are devoted to riding, hunting, coursing, or shooting, to visits in the neighbourhood, or to reading, ample materials for which are presented by the immense newspapers of the capital and the well-stored library of the mansion.

There are occasions on which all superiority of rank disappears, and when all classes are confounded together. Such are a marriage, a birth, or a recovery from ill health. Every one in the house, from the lord to the lowest groom, is admitted on these occasions.

After dinner the company (on this day more numerous by invitations addressed to neighbours not generally visited,) passes into the largest apartment of the mansion,

where the tenants and servants are already assembled. The principal personage walks through the crowd, and speaks to everybody. He then sits down at one of the extremities of the hall with his private friends, who are ranged in files on either side of him. At the other end, and in the same order, are ranged the servants, not even excepting the lowest. The men are in their liveries, the women in their best dresses; a dance now commences, and a general *melange* soon takes place. Ranks are confounded, and the glove of the mistress of the house, of the most disdainful lady, is soiled in the hand of a gamekeeper or a kitchen boy. At twelve o'clock the company retires, and leaves the scene to the servants, who prolong the ball and their momentary equality, till the hour when it is necessary for them to resume their accustomed avocations and return to their inferiority.

To sum up, this kind of country-life does not present all the pleasures which so considerable an expense, and the apparent liberty enjoyed, ought to procure. One does not always escape the prevailing *ennui*, resulting

from morning meals without order, or from the solitary walks which follow them. Nor does the etiquette practised on these occasions add to ease or good fellowship; for it is not generally the custom to meet or acknowledge each other's acquaintance, unless in the evening. The interminable dinners which wind up the day do not tend much to enliven it. At country-seats in England, there is certainly much display of fortune, and all the *éclat* and pomp which vanity can desire; but there is wanting the freedom, the pleasure, the ease, which one finds in a French château. After a sojourn of some months, we discover that we have spent our time and our money, and obtained in return a change of scene and place and little pleasure — noise without gaiety, much society and little true affection; in a word, a great deal of luxury and little enjoyment.

ENGLISHWOMEN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts made to persuade them to the contrary, Englishwomen play in society a very unimportant part. Their education would appear to prepare them for a very different future from that which is reserved for them. But the national manners impose a yoke upon them; and one sees the most decided characters prostrated before custom, assuming that apparent uniformity which distinguishes the exterior of the English people. Happy effect of the empire of custom, amongst a grave and reflecting nation, which has had the wisdom, up to the present time, neither to examine nor discuss its manners and constitution, which has consequently preserved both from change.

English female education proposes not to itself to create special beings—a species of idols, destined to be placed on a pedestal to attract the attention, command the admiration, and receive the homage, of mankind. It is in general rather private than public; masters attend to teach history, music, and drawing. A Swiss governess (for Switzerland generally supplies governesses to Great Britain) familiarises the pupils with the principles and practice of the French language. Habits of order and subordination result from the nature of the intercourse between parents and their children. Maternal affection is seldom accompanied with that officiousness so prevalent in France. Instead of an interchange of caresses, it is limited to attentions on the one part and respect on the other; and the admirable subordination which distinguishes the political arrangement takes its origin from the bosom of domestic life. The direction given to their infancy and youth indisposes Englishwomen to display. Their education leaves something to desire, it is true, on trivial points; but these imperfections may in some sort be considered

as advantages. Englishwomen do not hesitate to make a sacrifice of talents, of which a too complaisant flattery might render them vain, to their duties as wives and mothers. Reason applauds such sacrifices. The piano is no longer opened unless it be to supply the place of the violin at an off-hand ball; and the albums, for which the pencils and crayons of a whole society had been laid under contribution, are only turned over by the idle. The greater number of English ladies are thoroughly conversant with French and Italian literature; they know how to avail themselves of these advantages without either pedantry or affectation.

The freedom which girls enjoy in the interval between the completion of their education and their marriage appears to be a singular initiation into the seriousness and reserve of the conjugal state: you see them shopping or making visits, followed by a servant, talking with men of their acquaintance whom they meet, as well as riding out on horseback. They keep up a correspondence without giving the least account of it; and often appear

at balls without their mothers, attended by a friend, who accompanies them thither and brings them home, without concerning herself about them while at the ball.

This state of freedom presents either rare or trivial inconveniences, since it prevails without influencing, in any degree, the habits or duties which women contract in marrying. Subject, thenceforward, to the most trifling wishes of their husbands, they renounce, in order to please him, almost all the enjoyments of youth; above all, dancing, which is forbidden to English wives by the greater part of English husbands. They ride out less frequently, and only when it suits the husband's pleasure to accompany them. Never interfering with the government of the household, their sterile prerogative is limited to do the honours of their table, and their drawing-rooms—those enjoyments of self-love which custom reserves to them. These serious habits are rendered necessary by the rapid increase of their families.

A sort of presentiment of the privation attendant upon married life renders English-

women less forward to enter into this state. They rarely marry earlier than between twenty-two and twenty-four. The ten first years of wedded life are generally spent in giving effect to the command of "increase and multiply;" the ten years which follow are bestowed upon the education of their children, over whom they exercise the most constant and most praiseworthy superintendence. Their youth has already passed; their tastes have now disappeared. Without effort, without regrets, almost without reflection, they begin to grow old in the practice of a kind of life rendered the more supportable, because no contrast or comparison is placed before their eyes to make them feel its *désagrement*.

In observing English ladies occupied in their houses, one might be led to suppose that they were exclusively engaged in the regulation of them. Here would be a great mistake; they hardly know the names of the guests invited by their husbands. In all that relates to household economy they are not better informed; the husbands order every thing. But the ladies recompense themselves for their pas-

sive nullity by spending largely on their toilet. Their equipages are brilliant. From time to time, they display their diamonds in their salons, and their plumes of feathers in an opera-box, or at the Queen's drawing-room.

Twice or three times a year, they do the honours of balls or routs to a company invited in their names. Their happiness is complete, when they see a long article in the newspapers, composed by themselves or by an officious friend, and paid for as an advertisement, informing all London and all England of the most minute details of the *fêtes* they have given.

English ladies owe to their education, if not to their character, a great deal of their internal happiness. The ill humour of a husband is never sharpened by a reply on the part of the wife. The *brusquerie* is blunted by the patience of a wife; and an observation, however sharp, never provokes a quarrel on her part.

Englishwomen employ, moreover, an officiousness and an active care, which attach and fix their husbands. They never make the state of their health the pretext for complaint or opposition. An extreme neatness,

a *recherche* even, in their dress, habitual to Englishwomen, and not neglected at any hour of the day, indicates to the husband (who cannot fail to remark it) the desire to be agreeable. Kindness, and attentions of all kinds coerce the husband into a reciprocity of good offices; and love, at first a duty, becomes at length a habit, a sort of second nature.

Englishwomen thus attain (after having passed through a life without variety, without lively pleasure, without great chagrins) an honoured old age, preserving the attire, the neatness, and many of the tastes of youth.

The Englishwomen want that vocation to which France has been indebted for the excellent *ton* which is so much admired in the world. They do not seek to reign over society; to regulate and maintain its usages; to call before their tribunal the young men who permit themselves to violate these usages: they do not, in a word, exercise that sort of censorship which anticipates invasion, and represses the errors of "*mauvais ton.*" It is to their neglect of this, one of the most precious of their prerogatives, that is attributable the *laisser-aller* observable in

many of the salons of London, but which abound nevertheless in the elements of a first-rate society. Here would be a part to play for those ladies who had lost the empire of youth; a part which would surround them with much consideration and a respect accompanied with fear. It would create in England that which was in France (when a society really existed there);—namely, a council of venerable ladies, whose censure all feared, to whose judgments all bowed acquiescence.

English literature is indebted to the female pen for a great many works of distinguished merit, chiefly in the walk of romance. The social habits of their country render the occasions rare indeed when Englishwomen can shine in society. They are, therefore, necessitated to write, and they do so with a grace and refinement of observation, which give a very piquant character to their productions.

To some of these *literary* ladies is given, I know not why, the name of blue-stockings. They cultivate the sciences, and do not, any more than in France, escape the ridicule which overtakes the claim to *bel esprit*.

It may be asked what are Religion and Manners in the midst of this contrast of an uncontradicted youth, and a riper age enjoying so little liberty?

Religion and Manners are just what they are elsewhere.

Religion? With some women Religion is an ardent piety, eager to know and prone to discuss theology, and not exempt from intolerance. But among the greater part of women, it is a neglected Bible lying on a bed-room table; it is the rigorous observance of the Sunday; precision in going to church, a grave demeanour, and a solemn look within the house of God, an apparent zeal in the external practices of religion, and a great indifference at the bottom of all.

Manners? With prudent women it is an affectation of doubt of the virtue of women of other countries, and of susceptibility regarding those of their own nation; it is a prudery of language pushed to the most laughable affectation; a life passed in the society of husbands; the continual presence of a growing family; it is, in a word, a prudent demeanour

on the part of women, and an extreme reserve on the part of men.

With those women who form the exceptions, and on whom the malignity of the public has seized to produce scandal, it is sometimes a mixture of passion and love, of *amour propre*, and of those sudden and violent bursts of feeling which no consideration can restrain; sometimes it is guilt produced by surprise, by inability to guard against the lures of the seducer; an opportunity neither sought for nor shunned—sometimes it is crime without love, *éclat* without happiness, faults without remorse, perhaps even without recollections, as they have been without foresight or calculation.

It has pleased some people to institute comparisons between the women of England and those of other countries; but they have not shown themselves just in their judgments on the subject. The protection afforded to the one by the social system has not been sufficiently taken into account; nor has the abandonment in which the others are left by the usages, the manners, the prejudices, nay,

the very laws of their nation, been considered in the estimate.

In conclusion, it must be admitted that the English are among the most remarkable women in Europe. They combine in their persons not only beauty, but all that renders beauty valuable, devotion to their duties, varied accomplishments, cultivated minds; the union, in a word, of all that constitutes the happiness of their domestic circle and the charm of society.

WATERING PLACES.

THE busiest and the poorest among the better classes of England have always a certain portion of time and money on their hands, the employment of which embarrasses them. This arises at once from the importance and infrequency of the business requiring their attention, and from the order and economy which preside over their expenses. Be this as it may, after having passed the winter in the country and the spring in town, it is proper they should devise the means to while away the idle time of summer. Rich people travel; poor people go to the Continent, to seek a place where they can live economically, cheating themselves into the belief that they make a tour. The middle classes fix themselves (under

the pretext of bathing) upon the sea-side, at some place to which a short vogue has been given by the caprice and casual presence of some fashionable families. Such has been the mania for sea-bathing in England, that towns on the sea-coast have sprung into existence from the effect of this prevailing passion. Far removed from the capital, destitute of safe or sheltering harbours, without industry or commerce, these creations would, under other circumstances, never have been called into being.

Among these towns Brighton may be cited as a proof of the power of whim among a people, who do not pique themselves upon excluding singularity from their habits and their conduct. On an arid soil, unfavourable to vegetation, without a single tree, there existed a few years ago, at Brighton, a few huts of fishermen and smugglers, which have on a sudden been metamorphosed into an extensive and magnificent town. A fixed population of thirty thousand souls (which is doubled during certain months of the year) dwells in superb houses, constructed round the palace built by George the Fourth; a sovereign who secluded

himself from the public view, and who, in the latter years of his life, exhibited a dislike of the society of those whom he ought to have admitted to his intimacy. The nobility went to pass some days, and afterwards some weeks, in the town which was his favourite residence. Many persons of distinction built houses at Brighton; others rented them. At length it became fashionable to have a residence there. It soon, however, appeared that too many houses were built for the wants of the nobility. Another class of visiters which came afterwards occupied them; and in a few years this town became one of the richest and most frequented in England, its rapid progress being almost unaccountable. What would become of it, if that Fashion, which has favoured its development, should take it into her head to bestow her capricious favours elsewhere, and create another city; or, if the population which comes there to dissipate its *ennui*, should discover that a country without trees, a sea without ships, a shore without a harbour, a town without public institutions, without public walks, without any other means of diversion

than perpetual motion—in a word, a place created God knows why,—what, I say, if the population which comes thither, should at length discover that Brighton offers few resources for killing time, and that there are a host of other towns where the hours would hang less heavily? A complete desertion of Brighton might then be predicted. Its houses, unsustained by trade or industry, would fall into their ancient poverty; the momentary interruption of which would be evidenced by ruins of brick, and by the grass which would spring up among the stones in its deserted streets.

Margate and Ramsgate, by their position at the mouth of the Thames, as well as by their pleasant site, had, before Brighton arrived at its palmy state, drawn to themselves the crowd of rich who had nothing better to do. In these places, deserted for Brighton, the brilliant equipages of former days have not reappeared. A few job-carriages, drawn by one horse, and chairs on three wheels, drawn by a man down the sloping streets, are at the service of the cits of London, who wish to ape people of consequence. The value of

the houses at Margate and Ramsgate, as well as their trade, decreases or increases in the ratio of the number or the rarity of the birds of passage who come to visit them.

Other towns, such as Hastings, Eastbourne, Weymouth, Sidmouth, have sought to invite the neighbouring gentry, and to tempt some illustrious whim or royal prodigality in imitating the older watering-places. In one part of this speculative attempt, these towns have at least succeeded. They contain a moving population, not so numerous, so titled, or so wealthy as Brighton, but as much tormented by idleness, and as little capable of creating amusement for themselves, as the inhabitants of the rival towns. You may there see families pacing silently up and down the same walks, without accosting, without even saluting other families quite as *ennuyées* as themselves. There also you may perceive ladies seated in the balconies with book in hand, while their husbands behind them raise above their heads their telescopes, with which they follow the vessels that pass within view of the shore. There also may be perceived nurses and governesses superin-

tending the children committed to their care, but in the countenances of all and each is imprinted an air of lassitude and weariness which no one seeks to dissemble. Those gay *réunions* to be seen in France are not known in England. In France the very sound of a violin is sufficient, at places of summer resort, to get up a ball in the middle of a wood or the corner of a meadow; and the flagging interest is in turn excited by cards, by readings, by shows, scenes of plays, walks in picturesque sites, or by conversation, for which food is found in the most frivolous anecdote, as well as in the knottiest political discussion. At Dieppe, at Plombières, in the Alps, in the Pyrenees, people amuse themselves; at the English watering-places people bathe, eat and drink, walk and sleep, and when *ennui* becomes insufferably heavy, go elsewhere in the hope of dissipating their disorder on the road; but it nevertheless generally happens, that they carry their distemper home with them.

Some exceptions should undoubtedly be made to this unattractive but true picture of the customs of these occasional resorts of the

richer classes of English. Some towns are pointed out by them, where it is fashionable to amuse oneself. Leamington, Cheltenham, Brighton, are among the number. But in escaping one excess, one falls into another. At one place, people know neither how to form parties nor to divert themselves; at another place all is noise, crowd, and bustle; pleasure becomes a business, and seizes upon every moment; but pleasures are solemn and *exigeant*. It is necessary to be always under a species of constraint to taste of them, and to allow oneself to be carried unresistingly away by the whole current, without a single exception. Unless one wishes to be read out of society, one must take a ride out on horseback or in a carriage, or walk—one must hunt and pic-nic in the morning, and in the evening accept one dinner engagement, and appear at two balls. Among so many amusements and enjoyments, it ends in the fashionable victim having only one desire left, and that is to see the end of the watering season.

COMFORT.

THE English are very proud of that which they call comfort. This word serves to define their real, as well as their fancied enjoyments. It is employed also to extol that superiority of fortune to which they affect a great pretension as a contrast with other nations. If the English have now recovered from the prejudice that they eat in France the legs of frogs, instead of rounds of beef, they have not yet persuaded themselves that the enjoyments and pleasures of life are known on the other side of the Channel.

For strangers who do not take the trouble to observe, *comfort* is a conventional word, a sort of common-place, by means of which they analyze and recapitulate the sum of their enjoyments in England.

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Among the wealthy English *comfort* means great luxury and an expensive establishment. In the middle classes, *comfort* means a heavy, well-stuffed arm-chair in which the master of the house goes to sleep after dinner. You think I jest: no, verily! it is the exact truth. Independently of this chair, there is nothing which justifies the idea of general comfort which the word would seem to indicate. A dinner of boiled fish, and of plain vegetables destined to be mixed by way of sauce with all one eats — a piece of roast beef cut from the hardest and most tasteless part of the carcass; in place of napkins, a corner of the table-cloth; in lieu of dessert, nuts, cheese, and raisins; chairs with rush bottoms, sometimes covered with a cushion, which the least movement causes to fall to the ground; immense four-post beds, with feather bed, beneath which is a paillasse so arranged as to produce the effect of an ill-joined table — no clocks — and in each room a coal-fire, whose dust and smoke soil everything — grooved window-shutters, windows with running Venetian blinds and some-

times ill-draped calico curtains of a dark pattern: these are some of the English comforts, of which the natives of Albion are so boastful. But on the other hand it must be admitted, that great neatness and cleanliness are observable as well in the apartments as in the furniture. Amongst the lower classes the word *comfort* is never uttered.

SOCIAL RELATIONS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.

THE position which the princes of the Blood Royal occupy, is one of those customs of high society which most confounds the ideas of a Frenchman. You see them in a drawing-room unattended with any greater mark of respect than that which is bestowed on other personages of elevated rank. They are invited to dinners and *soirées* like private gentlemen. They mix, talk, and discuss with every individual in the room without exception. The dignity which should be inseparable from their rank, never interposes a barrier between them and any individual who is carried too far by the heat of argument. In these conflicts they are victorious or vanquished, as they are right

or wrong, or have more or less talent or address. The politeness of their adversary spares them none of the chagrin of a defeat. There are great advantages, and as notable disadvantages, attached to this state of things. By this continual contact, the princes acquire a more profound knowledge of the wants, of the resources, of the manners of society, of the character and capacity of its members; but this knowledge is reciprocal, and exposes them to rigorous judgments; and it can only be obtained by sacrificing the *prestige* so necessarily attached to the situation and person of princes, but which, nevertheless, so suddenly disappears when they have to undergo the sort of ordeal to which the scions of the blood royal expose themselves in England. It is not only in the *salons* of the higher classes that the princes are to be met with. You meet them in clubs, to the customs of which they conform without the least exception. They are also to be seen at political meetings, where they accept the president's chair, or the less elevated functions accorded to them by the capricious suffrages of the members. At charitable meet-

ings, or those having for object some question of public utility, they rival in philanthropy those who lay claim to that species of reputation, without any increase of esteem, affection, or popularity as their reward for such a departure from the *convenances* of royalty. Nor do they preserve that dignity which might, to a certain degree, be mingled with such habits. They live, think, and act, in a manner which does not permit them to sustain it. They embrace political opinions with the zeal of partisans, and, in place of directing and controlling the opinions they profess, they follow in the train, and are almost at the command of those leaders who are the *Coryphæi* of the party, and are only distinguished by their extreme opinions.

The English princes display little ostentation in their habits of life, or in their domestic economy. Their general mode of paying a compliment to those they like, is to ask a dinner of them, a species of civility which causes no more expense to those who are the objects of it than if it proceeded from one of their equals; it is but a dish or two added

to the family dinner. The political discussion which follows the repast partakes of its usual frankness and absence from restraint. The opinion of the prince is often unceremoniously contested, nor does His Royal Highness take offence at this freedom of debate. In the sporting season the male members of the royal family are accustomed to visit some of the principal nobility or rich gentry, whose houses become on such occasions the rendezvous of the nobility of the neighbourhood.

Does England or her princes reap any substantial benefit from the mode and manner of life which the latter have adopted? Assuredly not. If one were to judge by the reign of George the Fourth and by that of his successor, kings so brought up, have no greater stores of acquired knowledge, no better natural abilities, than sovereigns entrenched behind the etiquette of their courts or the dignity of their position. One is accustomed to see them perpetually, and they are therefore searchingly watched. People wish to find them on the throne such as they have observed them in the *salons*. They regard their

faults more than their good qualities. They look more to the prejudices they have inspired than to the qualities they possess. They are, in a word, kings, such as other kings are, shorn however of that respect which they cannot obtain in an equal degree. It is well then that other people should not envy England the education or citizen habits of her princes. It is well that continental nations should preserve for those destined to govern them that severe and rational etiquette, which renders their princes impervious to an almost always unfavourable, because rarely kind and well-disposed, investigation.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

In England, more than in any other country, the administration of justice must be understood to mean the interpretation, capricious in its form, and strange in its effects, of laws of every date, without any homogeneity of spirit, and at variance with the actual condition of society. Co-ordinate with tribunals of exception for facts, there exist other tribunals of the same kind for certain classes, and even for certain individuals, having each their code, their rules, their jurisprudence. Justice, which is in certain cases very expeditious, is very slow in others. Her manner of proceeding is prompt, her motions are quick enough when it is a question to imprison a man, to send him to Botany Bay, or to hang him outright. She

moves heavily, slowly, she temporises when the subject is a disputed succession, or the possession of a single field. Can it be, that in the first case the haste is gratuitous on the part of the judge, while in the second each of his delays is an immense profit to the court, its officers, and the bar! There are many people who think so, and there appears ground enough for this opinion, when each cause supplies exorbitant fees not only to the magistrates before whom it is brought, but also to other magistrates who are never likely to hear of it. These fees are renewed in the event of the most insignificant motion being made to the court. It often happens that years elapse before judgment is given in the simplest case, and law-suits are bequeathed from generation to generation, till an heir more favoured by fortune than his fellows finds himself rich enough to seek to revive the suit, or his opponent too poor to sustain it.

In this boasted land of freedom, individual liberty can hourly be compromised. Let a man go before a magistrate—let him declare on oath that another is indebted to him: a cer-

tain sum; and, without being held to proof of the debt—without the exhibition of any document or acknowledgement—without the privilege for the adverse party to contest his right, the creditor obtains a warrant of arrest, which is executed by bailiffs undistinguished by any exterior badge of office. Behold the pretended debtor imprisoned, and obliged, if he wishes to obtain his liberty, to find two persons who are to give bail for his appearance, under penalty of paying the sum which he is supposed to owe. Failing to obtain bail, he is locked up in prison till it may suit the creditor (and in this there is generally a considerable delay) to justify his action or to drop the suit. There is certainly a remedy provided against the creditor, but he often takes precautions to escape the action which may be commenced against him by the adverse party. Often too, looking to the enormity of the expense and the glorious uncertainty of the law, the latter hesitates to place his money in jeopardy, and puts up with the momentary sacrifice of his liberty.

A magistrate in England never hesitates to

pronounce in a case of affiliation, when the woman declares, on oath, that a person whom she names is the father of her child. Moral proof; rebutting testimony; nothing is admitted in favour of the man in a case like this, and a sum, large in proportion to the defendant's worldly means, is awarded to the complainant.

It is not long since the killing of a hare or a pheasant was punished by the transportation of the poacher. The robbery of a few shillings renders the thief obnoxious to capital punishments, and one can hardly foresee what might be the consequences if a zealous Protestant magistrate took it into his head to bring into operation the unrepealed laws of Elizabeth against the Catholics.

The dispensation of criminal and civil justice is confided to Judges of Assize. In criminal cases, the judge pronounces sentence on the verdict of the jury. A frightful list of condemnations appears on one and the same day. The effect of these is mitigated by the thought that the royal clemency will lighten the excessive severity of the sentences. But nevertheless, the number and severity of the penalties amply

vindicate society, the only end which the English criminal law completely attains; for, if we take our data from the continually increasing proportion of crimes, it must be admitted that the English system does not attain the end of prevention.

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION.

PEOPLE in France are astonished that a country can subsist where private interests are so regulated as to concur towards the public interest without any interference on the part of government — where births, marriages, and deaths reach the knowledge of all, notwithstanding the almost total absence of registers of the *état civil* — where there is no risk of being murdered at every corner of a street in a country where there are no *gend'armes:* it is a mystery to them how one can be found out in a land where there are no passports — how the safety of the state can be assured without the employment of spies — how there can be good roads without either a school of

ponts et chaussés or engineers, and how the march of government should be progressive in a community where these and such-like anomalies are so obviously discoverable. "Who and what," says the Frenchman, "supplies the place of functions and functionaries which appear indispensable in a well-organized society? Who and what supplies their place! In truth, nothing; or, if you will, *peu de chose* — reasonable beings, good sense, custom, imitation, instinct, patriotism, self-love, property applied to the public interests — these are the indefinable somethings which stand instead of the complex machinery of government boards and controlling committees, and which, varying in form in each locality, serve as the substitutes for the uniform codes of other countries, very sensible and very rational, no doubt, in their functional organization, but, nevertheless, producing mischief the moment they are put into action.

Some explanation is necessary to support this theory: it would embarrass me much to give any other than that supplied by facts. The English ministry govern without attempt-

ing to meddle or control: it leaves this last care to county and municipal institutions. The English government is not tenacious of that unity of ideas, that uniformity of plan and action, which, at first sight, should seem indispensable to good order and useful to society: the wheels of government are put in motion by an impulsion and force often resulting from different and opposite interests; nevertheless, everything which contributes to the simultaneous movement of the machine, operates as though it had been the effect of a united power directed to a common object. A Frenchman would wonder, if he were told that in the English counties there is no special administrator, no corporate or official body charged with the direction of the general interests, having fixed functions and coercive means of carrying into execution those detailed measures which they deem necessary. There are sheriffs and lord-lieutenants in the English counties; but they have no really permanent authority: they are but a species of supervisors chosen from the superior class, who substitute their personal influence for the

power which the law has not thought proper to give them.*

Below the sheriffs are the justices of the peace, chosen unlimitedly among the country gentlemen. At fixed epochs they assemble together at the quarter-sessions to administer justice. In the interval between the sessions of the peace, those among the justices who happen to be assembled at the principal county town, regulate affairs of local interest, without any other guide than their knowledge of the suitableness of such and such measures to the condition of the particular county in which they reside. The justices are listened to rather than obeyed by the parish officers —a body of men not appointed in a more regular manner, who, in virtue of their offices, have the conduct of parish affairs. Is a road to be made? The whole parish machinery is

* It is not to be expected that a foreigner should be very intimately acquainted with English law, which, according to Lord Coke, required the "viginti annorum lucubrationes:" it is, therefore, not wonderful that the Baron should here mistake. The English sheriff has much personal influence, no doubt, but more legal power.—TRANSLATOR.

at work. The large landed proprietor points out the direction of this road, the surveyor traces its outline, the mason constructs the bridges, and every one, according to the nature of his employment, without the intervention of any fixed rules or administrative forms, contributes to accomplish the matter in hand. Commenced by one parish, the road is continued by another, and thus extends across the county, perhaps across the kingdom. Who first thought of this road? —Who superintended the making of it? Nobody and everybody; the road, however, exists —you travel on it, and society is benefited.

Should the expense of making a road exceed the local means, the parish, by its organs — the county, by its representatives, demand the establishment of a toll. The parliament accedes to the demand, after instituting an inquiry distinguished by the same simplicity of forms as those of the justices in the first instance. A company, an individual speculator, the county itself, or the particular parish, undertakes, as the case may be, the

completion of the work on being guaranteed the receipts of the toll. Thus is the road finished, and its constant repair assured.

All local interests are governed by a system as little complicated as the foregoing. The functionaries (if one can give this appellation to the individuals of whom I have been speaking, whose personal position, rather than election, places them at the head of parochial affairs,) prosecute crimes and pursue the culpable: they inquire, they order the seizure of malefactors by any by-stander, if necessary. Nor does their power end here; for they can place these malefactors in the stocks, in order to prevent their escape, until the constables (a species of *gardes champêtres* in the country, and of serjeants in the town) arrive on the spot. These take them to the county prison; and at the quarter sessions, a jury composed of land-owners, rich farmers, and manufacturers, under the presidency of a justice of the peace, tries for such offences as are within its jurisdiction. The cognizance of crimes is reserved for a court of a higher order.

However numerous the taxes, however varied in their forms, however exorbitant in their amount, they are laid on and paid with an equal simplicity. The king's taxes are voted by the House of Commons; the parish taxes are agreed to in vestry: both are collected by a species of overseers or intendants, whose conduct is guaranteed by securities. The functions of these collectors are not indicated by any external badge, or by any particular costume.

The disinterestedness of the English administration of public matters is loudly extolled: in reality, the members of the local administration have no fixed salaries; but, on certain occasions, they obtain certain allowances, and are prodigal of them towards their inferior officers. The great vice of the English system is the want of that control necessary to restrain disorder and the *laisser aller* system. Despite the eulogiums bestowed on the economy of the English government, it is a much more expensive one than that of other countries.

Such a state of things would appear, and

would be in effect, the cause of disorganization everywhere else. If it did not already exist in England, the idea of creating it would never suggest itself; it would break down, on the mere attempt to modify it. Yet it is the fashion in France to cite this system, and to invoke its application. In order to the success of it on our soil, there should be ten centuries of antecedents and of practice. It should have for its basis an influential and respected aristocracy rooted in popular affection and in the institutions of the country, as in the feudal times, and impart to the people that habit of confidence in the superior classes which disposes their minds to a complete submission. These conditions fulfilled, it might be possible to introduce the English system of administration into France; but without these necessary adjuncts, the French people should be content to abide by their own institutions, and profit by those gleams of wisdom and of calm which appear at long intervals, in order to strengthen institutions which have not yet taken deep root, whatever strength may be erroneously ascribed to them. Since

the chief requisites are wanting in France for such a system of government—since the people wish neither aristocracies nor social distinctions—since they do not even admit of intellectual superiority, they stand in need of energetic laws, magistrates invested with extraordinary powers, *gend'armes*, and spies, to control them. This is a sad but indispensable condition of existence; it is the consequence of the systems adopted; it is the counterpoise, however inadequate, of an independence which has exceeded all bounds.

NAVY AND ARMY.

THE NAVY.

THE Navy of Great Britain is composed of 380 ships, of which there are ninety-four of the line, manned by a force of 29,000 officers, sailors, and *employés* of various grades. This immense force is distributed in magnificent harbours and sustained by arsenals the extent and organization of which correspond with the importance of the service.

The cost of the navy amounts to 4,500,000*l.* sterling, or 112,500,000 francs.

Though this sum may, at the first blush, appear large, yet it really is not so when the vast national uses of the English navy are taken into consideration. A hundred and fifty ships, spread over the surface of the seas, maintain the relations between the colonies and the parent

state. A hundred and eighty ships are always in commission, ready for immediate service: the remainder are on the stocks.

A stranger, however, would be led to conclude that some vice of organization or of administration exists in this department of the public service, were he to judge of the facility afforded for an immediate demonstration by the isolated fact of the admitted tardiness with which even a small armament could lately be brought to co-operate with a French fleet in interposing between Holland and Belgium.

England is now without doubt, and probably will long continue to be, the first naval power in the world. Her institutions, her tastes, her affections, her very prejudices, are directed to the means of preserving a supremacy placed beyond all doubt by the war of the Revolution. The possibility, nay, the very thought of resisting her naval power, has vanished since the period when the ill-success of her enemies, and her own assured triumphs, have demonstrated the vainness of the hope. The destruction of 156 ships of the line, 382 frigates, 662 corvettes and other vessels, form-

ing altogether a total of 2505 ships of war—fatally for her enemies, fortunately for herself—attest an undoubted superiority.

Since the proud period of her triumphs, the English navy has maintained its numerical superiority; whilst the navies of Holland and Spain, which, in 1792 and 1793, measured their strength with her, have made no efforts to repair these defeats, or to increase their maritime power. It is no doubt true that the governments of France, Russia, and the United States of America have bestowed on their respective navies much care and attention, which, in the long run, will certainly not be without their results; but, nevertheless, without a firm alliance, and a concurrence of circumstances difficult to combine, it would be doubtful if these states could struggle, with any hope of success, against the power of the English navy.

There are not wanting those who assert, that in the vast number of vessels of war which we have enumerated, there are many very old and nearly unfit for service; and an inspection of the dock-yards of Great Britain would lead to the belief that it would require not

only time, but also a considerable outlay, to give to the English navy that real strength of which it now undoubtedly presents the semblance. It is very difficult for a foreigner to apportion the degree of confidence which is due to these disparaging assertions, for it is no easy matter to obtain access either to the docks or arsenals; and, in truth, every means are adopted to deprive the public of all correct data on which to form an opinion. Supposing, however, these assertions to be well founded, there can be no doubt that the navy would start into efficiency on the very first appearance of danger; the promptings of national pride, the suggestions of self-interest, would alike induce the British nation to submit to every sacrifice necessary to the maintenance and increase of her naval force. In this, common sense and national self-love would agree, and every sentiment and feeling of the public mind would contribute to sustain a power no less indispensable to the prosperity and safety of the country, than to the glory of England.

THE ARMY.

If we are to estimate the army of Great Britain by the glorious and very profitable part which she has played in late wars, it will fall short of a standard of such magnitude. The number of men at this moment in actual service does not exceed 117,000, distributed as follows:—

England and Scotland .	30,000
Ireland	24,000
The Colonies . . .	37,000
East Indies . . .	26,000
Grand total .	117,000

England has in reality, therefore, a disposable force of only 54,000 men. The expense of the service amounts to 13,400,000*l.* sterling, (335,000,000 of francs.)

In this estimate, the military pensions and half-pay amount to nearly 5,000,000*l.* sterling, (125,000,000 of francs;) and the artillery to 450,000*l.* sterling, (12,000,000 of francs.)

If the opinion of certain economists were

admitted, a very considerable diminution in this enormous expense could be effected by the correction of many abuses which have crept into the administration of the army. The reduction of the numerical force of the service; the suppression of certain sinecures connected with it; the consolidation of some offices with others; a complete revision of superannuation pensions; the revision also of the system of half-pay—these are the means proposed for adapting the war-budget to the exigencies of the service. Some of these reasonings are, no doubt, specious, and calculated to demonstrate that the military system of England is susceptible of much improvement under the head of economy.

Whether one considers their mode of manœuvring, their excellent discipline, or their general appearance, it must certainly be admitted that it would be difficult to find in any country a finer body of troops than the English. The corps of cavalry, the three regiments of infantry, and the division of artillery, which form together the royal guard, are in truth admirable. Nor would the army

of the line suffer in the comparison with any other army in the world.

English military discipline does not reject the aid of the severest corporal punishment: a hundred, two hundred, nay, even three hundred lashes, are in England the constant punishment for faults which, in the French army, would be atoned for by one or two months' imprisonment.

With very few exceptions, the advancement of a private is limited to the grade of a non-commissioned officer. Commissions, from the rank of ensign to that of lieutenant-colonel, are purchaseable. In the Guards an ensign's commission costs 1200*l.* (30,000 francs;) a lieutenant's, 1600*l.* (40,000 francs;) a lieutenant-colonel's, 7000*l.* (176,000 francs.) Commissions are cheaper in the regiments of the line. A little fortune is necessary in England to run the race of glory. Woe to the soldier in England who is without money, for, in the road of promotion, he must come to a dead halt. The length of his purse, and not of his services, is the limit of his career. However brilliant his achievements, his sword will

do nothing for him unless sustained by his purse. This custom of purchasing every step of promotion is as old as the army itself. The system has hitherto worked marvellously, and, what is stranger still, has given rise to few complaints. In this age of change, however, it is not difficult to foresee that some alteration must take place. The most remarkable effect of the system is the rendering the army almost exclusively accessible to rich officers, or, what is nearly the same, to those whose families are so. These officers bring to their profession gentlemanly manners and cultivated minds; no substitutes for bravery, certainly, but adding fresh lustre to it where it already exists.

The Military School of Woolwich furnishes the necessary complement of officers to the artillery and engineers. In these corps promotion is on a different footing; it is not the effect of purchase.

In time of war, independently of the regular army, regiments of militia are raised for the defence of the country. In time of peace a force exists under the name of yeomanry: it is

a corps of cavalry, and in the nature of its service, as well as in its composition, it bears much analogy to the National Guard of France. The yeomanry force is commanded by the nobility and gentry in the different counties: they are mustered and exercised during about twelve days in every year. The appearance of this yeomanry troop is admirable. In a time of profound peace, no positive utility results from these musters, unless the giving of dinners and *fêtes*, and horse-races, are found to have their advantages.

Such is the actual condition of the English army: hardly sufficient to furnish troops for indispensable garrisons, it no longer possesses the *materiel* for those gigantic enterprises in which England has been at different epochs engaged, and more particularly at the period of the war of the first Revolution. In a combination of circumstances similar to those of the first revolutionary war, it would be necessary to have recourse to similar means: to forced levies in England, subsidies to foreign troops, loans, and the augmentation of a debt sufficiently exorbitant already.

Those circumstances must indeed be of a grave and serious nature which could induce any minister to adopt such a course as this — a course which would with difficulty obtain the assent of public opinion. It is probable that the English Government will for the future seek to sustain its influence over Continental politics by negotiation, by pretensions of superiority carefully kept up, and derived from the custom of other nations (rather the result of habit than of reflection) to acknowledge that superiority. Perhaps, also, her diplomacy may avail itself of the threat of the ruin which the hostile intervention of a formidable navy would bring down on European commerce in general.

In the actual position of affairs, the military power of England is diminished by her situation in reference to Ireland, rendered disaffected and almost inimical by the exercise of a dominion which has taken the character and complexion of a conquest, and, by an exceptional system of administration, little calculated to unite together in bonds of affection two people still more divided in

national character and religion than they are by the arm of the sea which separates them from each other. Without doubt, however, an accommodation will take place between the two countries: such an arrangement, desirable with reference to the real interests of both, is of the first necessity to England, as respects the recruiting of her army, and the distribution of her disposable force. Till this object shall have been accomplished, the English ministry will no doubt exhibit a commendable reserve, in seeking to avoid any intervention in the affairs of the Continent, and, least of all, that intervention which would be likely to terminate in open hostilities.

PUBLIC OPINION.

PUBLIC Opinion may be considered one of the phenomena of England. It cannot be better described than by likening it to a cement, which works its way everywhere, and connects together the heterogeneous materials, out of which has arisen, none can say how or when, the stupendous and stately edifice of the British Constitution. Its want of uniformity receives a character of consistency from public opinion, which masks its defects and protects it from falling. The whole fabric appears to have sprung from the workings of one mind, though all its component parts result from remote circumstances—from the spirit of party —the caprice of the governing power—the unreflecting, and occasionally, all-powerful will of the governed.

The English people think themselves free, because, though subject to a shapeless mass of tyrannical and absurd laws, they see the King pass by them and are not obliged to make him a reverence. They think themselves well governed, because Parliament has the power to turn out the Ministry, when the interests of the stronger party require it. They do not complain of the enormity of the taxes, because they are voted by the House of Commons, whose influential members contrive to take much more from the national treasury than they contribute to it. They resign themselves without a murmur, nay, without a thought, to all the vexations and inconveniences of an indirect taxation (of which the greater part of the revenue is composed), because habit has long familiarised them with the discomfort of this harassing mode of proceeding. They think themselves rich, because they buy and sell dearly. They consider the public wealth proof against every shock, because it rests upon a system of credit, the inconceivable abuse of which has not caused it to give way. They think the nation power-

ful, because there was a time when, multiplying loans without troubling themselves about the means of reimbursement, the English Government bought the blood of Continental nations, created armies, opposed people to people, and by these means exercised supreme control over European politics. They fancy, with wonted pride, that British supremacy must hold perpetual sway, because their ambassadors maintain in certain courts the lofty language which they affected thirty years ago; and because garrisons, factories, military and commercial settlements are established at places the immense distance of which from each other is in some sort concealed by the ubiquitous power of the English fleets. In a word, the most inconceivable illusion converts into a species of national pride that which should be a subject of painful reflection and real disquietude.

Who can tell what would happen, if, for example, the people, seriously intent upon examining their position, should say to each other, "Where is our so much-vaunted Constitution? In Magna Charta? In that compact wrested by the violence of some ignorant

feudal lords of the middle age from the hands of John Lackland? Public opinion, and a more advanced civilization, now justly appreciate that charter. Such a constitution could only suit us if we fell back to the barbarism of the thirteenth century. Does our Constitution exist in the Act of Settlement signed by William III. in 1688? The spirit of that Act is hardly respected. The Act of Settlement is no longer fitted for us. Does it exist, then, in the multiplicity of laws, acts, and regulations, —that shapeless code which no man has had the courage to wade through? Who could there find the spirit of our Constitution? who could have the patience or the power to adapt or apply them to a state of society so unlike that of the period when those laws were framed, which, being the offspring of an immediate necessity, attest the movement and progressive advances of society? There is, then, no Constitution. I must have one; but to make it, I must proceed to work my own way. I shall lay hold of the elements of society, and scatter them about at random. In adjusting themselves, these elements shall re-

main as chance shall have placed them. From their very confusion a new order shall arise. This first germ of order, all-imperfect though it be, will bring about other combinations, of which I know as little as I can foresee them, but which will assuredly be different from what at present exists. In a word, I shall accomplish a revolution; I cannot lose by the change, for I have nothing that I can call my own, either in fixed property or in imaginary rights. Shall I have less liberty, according to my meaning of the word? That were difficult indeed. Without doubt the right of administering justice shall no longer belong exclusively to those who, possessing every thing, carry to the most revolting excess the care of self-preservation; I shall no longer be sent to Australia, be exposed to the fury of the savages of its deserts, condemned to endless and unpaid labour, in an unwholesome country, for having snared some hares, which nearly ruined my crop, in a field for which I paid too much rent. These stocks — prisons without even the advantage of walls — in which my limbs are sure to be confined on

the first fault that I commit, shall for ever disappear from those public roads, where, in utter defiance of common prudence, they expose me to shame and insults. Directly or indirectly, immediately, or by delegates of my own choosing, I shall participate in the functions of legislation. I shall reform abuses, or, if some should still arise, I know how to turn them to my profit. The taxes shall not be collected without my deducting, by some means or other, the portion which I shall have to contribute to them. I shall not suffer the amount of taxation to enter into the price of any article that I consume. The land is there to defray the taxes, unless by the workings of the revolution it shall have passed into other hands than those which have too long possessed it. Meanwhile, no more taxes on beer, leather, candles, or tobacco,—on the pavement we tread, on the air we breathe. As to those taxes levied upon luxuries, I shall support them till I become rich myself. As to the finances, I shall know quite as much as the statesmen of the present day. I shall follow their example; my finances shall be the money of others; my strength

shall be my credit and my mint. Politics which a stony diplomacy has hitherto confined to the cabinet of kings, shall be remoulded in the propagation of my principles,—in an appeal to the popular passions of every country. Come what may, my business is to destroy every existing institution, and subvert every part of our social organization. I shall take counsel from the state of things which may spring out of the change. Forward!"

The imaginary case which I have just laid down may not be far removed from a fatal reality. Up to the present time, discontent has been, in a measure, isolated, and confined to individuals: it has been as devoid of danger as of inconvenience. But now, a revolutionary spirit has infused that discontent into all classes, and, at no distant period, we shall witness its formidable progress. For a long time, the word *Reform* had been familiarised to the people's ears. Innovators prepared them to desire it as a want which brooked no delay, and which was equally felt by those who clamoured for it, and those whose interests it would affect. This latter class has not seen

that the sacrifices they would be called upon to make, far from putting off the evil day, has only rendered more inevitable the death-struggle which must now be fought between indigence and property. Violence will now wrest that which a tardy prudence would recommend to withhold. The battle will not be long contested, if the weaker party are the first to aid in the overthrow of institutions which have hitherto protected them.

Public opinion, it will be said, is too enlightened to pass beyond the limits prescribed by wisdom. This sentiment, an instinct without proper direction among other nations, is a sixth faculty among the English; with them all error is impossible. See the wonders which have sprung from it; examine the ascendency it exercises over men and customs, from the king to the sailor, from the regulation of the Chancellor's budget, to the expenditure of the poor's rates in the smallest parish.

I am not, I must own, completely convinced of the wonderful results that are to flow from the workings of public opinion. I see cer-

tain matters of detail proceeding with regularity — without violence, without effort, without any interference on the part of the Government, which, in other countries, introduces itself everywhere with the view of directing or fettering every thing. I agree that England is the country where each man knows his own business best. Thus the King folds his arms across and looks on, always assuming that he has a taste for observation; for, in general, an English king only attends to the affairs of Government by way of gratifying his curiosity. The ministers govern; the Parliament overturns them at its pleasure, but by the most legal process in the world; the people pay, but now and then arrogate to themselves the right to knock down the tax-collectors and the constables who protect them. But, as they are tenacious of forms, and as one or two pounds of lead at the end of the constable's staff in no degree alters its form, the people do not take offence at the blows levelled at their heads. The awards of the Lord Mayor are submitted to with as much respect by the hackney-coach-

men, amerced in a smart fine, as are the judgments of the Lord Chancellor by the first nobleman in the kingdom. Every artisan reads the newspaper at breakfast, but works not the less on that account. All this is wonderful, no doubt; but are these wonders the effect of public opinion? Are they not to be ascribed to a kind of subordination to authority, converted not only into custom, but into law? and is there a law more respected or more binding than this very habit? On the other hand, does not private interest (artfully introduced into every thing in England) exercise also a great influence over this so much admired progress of public opinion; for, destroy the basis of it, compel private interest, as will eventually be the case, to modify its combinations, which it is, perhaps, at no pains to calculate, but receives as it finds them, and we shall see what remains of that public opinion which inspires so much confidence. Deprived of every incitement which directs it to a definite end and object—launched into a career of action, the limits of which are vague and indefinite—its spirit will

become divided—it will wander in every direction, and exercise itself to destroy the few institutions which shall float on the surface of the universal cataclysm. In the end, public opinion will be overwhelmed by the general confusion, to the progress of which it had been ineffectually opposed.

Another cause will, in season, be superadded to that which I have just mentioned, and cannot fail to unnerve that public opinion, so long the surest conservative guarantee, as it has been the greatest glory of Great Britain. Isolated by her insular position, England was still more so by the pride and austerity of her national character. A certain something (I hardly know what to call it) resembling unsociability of character, had saved her from that friction which had worn out the more prominent features of other nations. England had felt a pride in preserving her ideas, her forms, her prejudices, wholly regardless of what militated against them. Thus protected, public opinion maintained its force and its influence. But this barrier is now broken down. The English, who heretofore

only travelled in individual instances, now travel in masses. They lay aside the inconvenient burden of that haughtiness which preserved around them a truly British atmosphere, and made them breathe a British air wherever they bent their steps. Their first endeavour, when they land on a foreign soil, is to efface all impression of their distinctive nationality. This, which at first is only with them a sort of convenient arrangement, becomes at length a settled habit, which they adhere to themselves, and on their return communicate to others. The travelled English do not fail to institute a comparison between what they have seen abroad, and what they find established at home, and this comparison does not always redound to the advantage of their country. True, they have not lost their love of country; but it is not that fervid and exclusive love which obtained formerly. The need of those luxuries which they have seen elsewhere manifests itself, and the contagion of foreign customs is now making a daily inroad in England: how would it be if with this fusion of manners a fusion of political interests mingled?

How would it be if the English Government relaxed that rigidity—that unmanageable, unbending egotism, which has hitherto distinguished its principles from those of the governments of other countries? In such a combination of circumstances, public opinion would consign to the dictionary of by-gone usages certain exploded national customs and manners, laid aside like obsolete words, only applied to express ideas which have ceased to exist.

After having thus examined what is really useful and effective in public opinion in England, it will be a matter of some interest now to consider the influence which this opinion exercises on individual minds, the modifications it imprints, the force it communicates to them. The observations I have been making lead us to a comparison between a country where public opinion is so powerful, so active, so profoundly felt among all classes, and a country in which public opinion is only to be found in the intemperate discourses of the orators of the dominant party. It had long been the fashion on the Continent to attach that elevation and general superiority to the Eng-

lish mind and character which superseded the necessity of closer inquiry. Ideas such as these were adopted on trust, and hence it has arisen that men the most disposed to question the basis on which this opinion rested, have not found in their minds the power of doubting on a question on which there existed a conventional accord. So long as France and England were only observers of each other in the distance, so long as the relations only of nation to nation subsisted between them, numerous general facts presented themselves to accredit the idea of the superiority of one people over the other. But these nations have since had constant intercourse together; they have approximated more closely. Individuals of both countries have come into contact; they have had the opportunity of studying and appreciating each other, and opinion has changed. Such, at least, are the observations which a prolonged sojourn in England, and an intimate intercourse with the most distinguished classes of society have enabled me to make, and which are at variance with what had hitherto been taken for granted.

An Englishman is a being unambitious of the

means of shining in society, and just as careless in the display of his natural endowments or acquired knowledge. This arises from the English system of education, which is in accordance with the national habits and usages. He is careless in his address, and does not lay claim to much penetration, or to a spirit of close inquiry. He gives to discussion the form of a mere conversation, but his manner of handling a question savours of prejudice. He proceeds rather according to received notions than to new ideas. In a word, his talent appears but the result of good common sense, his eloquence but a repetition and an application of the daily chit-chat. His thoughts, as well as his forms of expression, are drawn from a common fund, open to all those who desire the resort to it. Even when he individualizes himself, he remains a part of the whole to which he belongs. This steady rule of conduct, the effect of excellent calculation, saves him from the consequences of many grave errors, and the experience by which he has become sensible of its value is to him a safe and unerring guide.

It is quite otherwise in France, where each

individual belongs to himself, and is altogether individualized. His ideas, his political opinions, his judgment, his direction of conduct,—he claims to derive all from himself. Woe to him if these are of base alloy! woe to him if from them he only draws forth false and dangerous errors! for on that account he does not the less persist in the line which he has marked out. All things combine to this end. No national experience has accrued from the immense and numerous errors of forty years of revolutions; these have only brought in their train public or private misfortune. There is no public instruction—of national morality, nothing. The past is always counted for evil, while it is yet near our own time. The more one's remembrances are distant, the more one familiarises oneself with them, and in a little time one is inclined to think that they could be again reproduced without much detriment. As there exists not in France a depôt to combine and mingle facts and theories, so as to produce what is called a Public Opinion—as each individual is hurried away towards an object of which he has but a faint notion, with-

out embarrassing himself with the considerations of the point where he shall stop, or of the circumstances which can render the journey perilous and the arrival uncertain; and as in place of that general good sense, created among our neighbours by the habit of doubt and the very defects of their education, we Frenchmen have only recourse to our individual information; we say and do all the foolish things imaginable, and are content to find in the *éclat* which they produce a compensation for the serious evils they inflict.

In both countries Education has a vast influence in producing these results. English Education may be likened to English Legislation. It is a compound of customs, neither very rational nor well-grounded; often incoherent with each other, and nevertheless the result is productive of much good to society. The mind of the English is formed much more by the knowledge they acquire in the bosom of their families, to which they are never strangers, than by the methodical instruction they receive in colleges. As children, they are initiated into the usages of the world; they are left to themselves

in a crowd of circumstances, which cannot fail to bring their powers of reflection to the test; they are abandoned to their own free will, without any eye to watch their motions, or any hand to guide their inexperience. Their education is pursued in the midst of continual distractions, favoured and promoted by those vacations which enable them to spend five months out of the twelve under the parental roof. Thus they make up in practical experience for what they want in positive knowledge. They emerge from the Universities familiarised with the study of those subjects which will most frequently present themselves to their notice in their political career, treating them without pretension as without originality, but according to the forms adopted by their fathers, in a manner which may be called hereditary; quite prepared to be like those who shall have preceded them—not men of brilliant acquirements, but useful members of a well-organized society, the usages of which they will never feel the desire or the need to change; well-fitted, in a word, to pass from the benches of the University to those of Parliament, and

even to occupy a seat on the magisterial bench.

In France, on the other hand, education seems to have no other object than to create exceptions. Its earliest developement has a tendency to wean a young man from the beings he should cherish and respect, and to detach him from a society in which he is destined to play a part. Education in France seeks to inoculate her pupil with principles, without teaching him their practical application. French education deals with general ideas, from which the pupil deduces principles according to his tastes, his position, his want of reflection; and, in consequence, he traces out for himself a line of conduct too often in opposition to his personal interests, and almost always to the general weal. Emerged from the schools, a young Frenchman finds neither in society, nor in the national customs, any thing decisive or positive which can correct his judgment and turn him into the right path. It is from his individual self alone—it is from a mind perverted by studies, which have procured him an extensive knowledge to no other end

than to render the application of it the more difficult—it is from an imagination saturated with dangerous theories, that he takes counsel. He preserves in the developement of those systems which he has created or adopted for himself, that use of sonorous phrases—of rounded periods, which he transfers from the schools to active life. Should he have spoken the last in a debate, he is impressed with the idea that he has carried conviction home to the minds of all. He is confirmed in errors which foolish self-love induces him to defend, because he finds not in the community to which he belongs that calm good sense, so diffused, so general, so powerful in England, yet so rare in France,—a good sense, which would present the surest means of correcting the extravagance of his opinions.

In France there is more brilliancy, but less solidity of thought and of action than in England. Thrown into the world rich in acquired knowledge, and under a pressing necessity to use it, the Frenchman finds nothing to direct and enlighten him in the use he shall make of this acquisition; nothing which guards him

from the temptation of making an abstraction of every thing except his own self-love.

In England nothing is retained in the system of public education which can tend to give a man an unlimited confidence in himself; nothing which dispenses with the necessity of having constant recourse to the general experience; that safe and impartial counsellor which bids us regard the public interest as the point from which all private interests should spring, and to which they should all return. It results that France must furnish a greater number of declaimers, of adventurous spirits, of remarkable events, of terrible catastrophes: in fine, of those qualities which rather constitute the glory than the happiness of a people. England has a greater number of citizens attached to her real interests, and disposed to defend them without *éclat*, but in good faith and sincerity. She may not march onward in the career of improvement, but she does not retrograde in power and prosperity. No one individual on her soil attracts attention, but the great body of her people are happy. In France, ac-

cordingly, a revolution is accomplished in three days. In England, the country deliberates many years before the work of reform is entered on, and, once commenced, the results are without danger, for the passions of men are already cooled. If an impartial judgment assigns to France a greater developement of individual mind, it must be admitted, on the other hand, that the public spirit of England possesses a force and a power, the germ of that real superiority which she can claim over France, in regard to the permanence of her institutions, and their influence on the condition of every member of society.

AN ELECTION.

It is indeed an imposing spectacle to behold a people exercising their share in the sovereignty, choosing their delegates, and pointing out in their assemblies, and by their acclamations, and their suffrages, the men whom they think worthy to be selected for the defence of their rights and the maintenance of their liberties. Yes, it is indeed an imposing spectacle; but if you only seek to preserve an illusion which seduces you, if you fear to abate any portion of the enthusiasm which you feel for representative governments in general, and for the English government in particular, beware of attending at any of the English elections. Remain at home during their progress, otherwise those opinions to which you would have yielded,

without seeking to base them on any solid foundation, will entirely disappear.

One fine morning we learn that it has suited the Ministers to make the King, by his will and pleasure, dissolve the parliament. Behold the people fancying themselves something; ambitious hopes excited or alarmed, and ambitious men flying in all directions, London a desert, and the provinces visited by their richest inhabitants. Behold aristocratic haughtiness humbling itself before plebeian pride. Neither men nor opinions are now in their proper places. The social scale is reversed, and all its established rules and conventional gradations participate in this movement. Hauteur, disdain, refusals, all are hurled back from him who had been the object of them upon the original dispenser. He who was heretofore lowest is now highest. He who was wont to command is now obliged to supplicate. Hence a train of justifications, of offers, of services, and of pledges from the candidate. It is pleasant to see a noble lord ungloving his hand to place it in the coarse and filthy fist of his butcher or his tenant; promising to the one

the continuance of his custom, to the other the renewal of his lease, inquiring into the health and welfare of their families, and mingling these inquiries with the canvass of a vote and a protestation of attachment to the people, pretty much in the following fashion:—The honourable canvasser admits that he caused to be transported to Botany Bay a poacher who had snared some of his pheasants. He laments the fate of the poor devil—arraigns the severity of the laws, and damns all game. He will kill all his hares, and solicit the pardon of the poacher, who has had after all but a pleasant and entertaining trip to New South Wales, and will be the better enabled to value a system of reform which will effectually save him from the risk of a second trip. He laments the lot of the farmer who has to yield him the tithe of his crops. He will be the first, as he is the most anxious, to put an end to the system of tithes, which though it has added, and continues to add, to his fortune, is nevertheless a real heart-sore to him. In seeking to protect machinery, which abridges human

labour, he will not be neglectful of modes of employment for the indigent classes. He will vote for the abolition of all taxes, without at all impairing the regularity of the public service. There shall be perfect liberty to do, or say, or write what people list, and a consequent increase of order and tranquillity. It shall be the golden age, if he is returned to parliament, and England shall become another El Dorado!

The advent, however, of this era of prosperity and universal contentment must depend on the success of the pretensions of him who can alone procure so many felicities, who will sacrifice for the public good his simple and modest tastes, his retired habits, his aversion to a life of display and agitation, his domestic happiness, and his private fortune.

Some simpletons are taken with these fine speeches; they promise their votes. Others more circumspect require theirs to be bought, and stipulate for the immediate fulfilment of the promises personally made to them. As to those promises which are only general, they leave them to the good faith of the candidate.

There are some who refuse him their votes because they do not hold his opinions, and expect more from his rival, or have already secured better conditions from the latter.

Every candidate is obliged to canvass; in other words, to make a personal journey through town and country, stopping at the house of each elector, even of those whom he knows to be most opposed to him, and whose votes he despairs of obtaining on any condition. He must shake hands with every one, listen to all observations, hear the directions and the sharp reproaches sometimes addressed to him, promise all that he is asked, thus humbling himself before popular arrogance, and compromising the dignity of the rank to which he aspires. The efforts of the candidate, no matter how great his ardour and activity, cannot extend to all those whom it is important to gain over. He selects among a certain class of men addicted to this peculiar pursuit, an election agent, who on being paid a certain sum, or after entering into a regular stipulation, as between attorney and client, engages to procure him votes. He also provides himself

with a barrister, who for a few hundred pounds contests, whether right or wrong, the validity of his opponent's votes, and defends on the same principle the votes given in favour of his client. Letters, journeys, dinners, nothing is neglected to influence a voter. Accounts are opened with all persons licensed to keep horses; with all innkeepers, so that the electors may be defrayed their travelling expenses; and they on their parts certainly avail themselves largely of this privilege. The roads are covered with carriages and four containing voters, who on other occasions travel on the outside of the common stage; refreshments await the contented electors at each relay, and this happy life lasts till they return home.

In the midst of these preliminaries, nothing is neglected to create a cloud of opinion favourable to the candidate. The newspapers in his interest register his promises, vaunt his talents, quote fragments of his speeches; should he not have made speeches, they are manufactured for him on these occasions; they pour forth their eulogies on generations of his ancestors which have long passed away. You

see in the streets of London men carrying before and behind them, in order to attract notice, printed bills in large letters announcing the name of the candidate, and the course of conduct he pledges himself to pursue. When the candidate is unknown to fame, the public is informed of what he will say and do. Should his political character be well known, the object he will have in view is indicated by a phrase or a word; an exclamation of "N—— for ever!" answering to our "*Vive N——!*" is attached to his name. The handbills and the ribands which adorn these placards are of the colour adopted by the candidate; his partisans decorate themselves with similar ribands, and the horses and carriages are decked out in like manner.

On the appointed day both parties appear on the hustings. These are erected in a public square, for the accommodation of the candidates, who arrive on horseback or in carriages, each party preceded by musicians, and followed by their friends and that portion of the mob which has declared for them. Flags bearing appropriate mottoes rally this motley group,

which advances amidst the mingled applause and hisses of the spectators.

Each person having taken his place, the sheriff or returning officer appointed to preside at the election, and who is neither distinguished by a particular costume, nor even a seat (for he is usually standing like the assistants), opens the proceedings, and swears the candidates on the Gospels that they have not resorted to unlawful means, or to any species of bribing.* This oath taken under the eyes of the populace, who know all that has been going on beforehand, should not seem calculated to inspire them with much confidence in the respect which the sworn party will entertain for his solemn engagements. This ceremony being gone through, a friend of each of the candidates proposes him in a short but impassioned speech. Another friend seconds the proposal. The can-

* The author is mistaken. No such oath as here spoken of is taken, though the institution of such an oath should seem to be a most desirable reform. The only oath which can be put to the candidates is one touching their qualification in land, and even that must be tendered on the demand of a candidate or elector. Vide Shepherd's Election Law and the other authorities.—TRANSLATOR.

didate himself now appears, and expatiates with self-satisfaction on the praises which have been given him. His discourse, to be effective, should be prolix, full of declamatory matter, and pronounced with every violence of gesture and emphasis.

This formality is renewed for each candidate. Should there be no opposition—should the election be uncontested, the returning officer informs the electors that he will proceed immediately to the nomination,* and he invites the electors to hold up their hands in token of assent. If the number of raised hands predominates, the new member is proclaimed and the assembly dissolved.

This latter occurrence is rare, and only takes place in towns where the well-known current of opinion, and the menacing attitude of a turbulent population, lead to apprehend acts of violence, for which no chance of success

* This is not called "nomination," but show of hands. The "nomination" is the naming or proposing of the candidate by two electors, as alluded to by the author in a preceding part of this chapter.—TRANSLATOR.

could compensate. Such are the elections of Westminster, Southwark, and of the great manufacturing towns generally. Well-disposed people, even among the friends of the candidates, do not take part in these turbulent assemblies, which are composed of the lowest class of electors, and of a populace always ready to swell their numbers, as affording a hope of disturbances and a pretext for them.

When there is a contested election, the Sheriff proceeds to take a poll. Each elector mounts on the hustings and inscribes, or causes to be inscribed, his name in the poll-book of the candidate he wishes to be returned. A contested election may last fourteen days.* So long a period is devoted by the candidates to the muster of their friends, and of individuals whose votes are promised to them. Couriers are sent from one extremity of England to another; agents run about in all quarters, and electors travel, all at the expense of the candidate, who

* Not under the Reform Bill. Under the old system an election might last fifteen days.—TRANSLATOR.

is not deterred by the enormity of the cost from the pursuit of his enterprise. Each party unites his means of defence and attack, manœuvres with dexterity, and exhibits considerable talent in wielding the resources at command. All means are lawful for the attainment of the end in view. Scandal, calumny, reproaches, and menaces, are unsparingly used. The hustings are the tribunes from whence proceed the most vehement speeches, the grossest insults. Often matters do not end here, and missiles are resorted to. Oranges, apples, potatoes, are flung at the heads of antagonist parties. When these are exhausted, they next come to blows. The strongest party remaining in possession of the field of battle, excludes the vanquished, puts an end to the election, and completes the sport by attacking the houses of the chiefs of the opposite party. During this expedition, the successful candidates are placed in chairs adorned with party-coloured ribands, and carried in triumph through the town by a dozen of the stoutest and least drunken of their supporters. The procession halts occasionally, the victorious candidate makes a

speech, they again move on, and meet at an election dinner, which closes with songs in favour of the new member, toasts, harangues, and general drunkenness.

The ceremony of chairing is that which flatters most the vanity of an Englishman. Those who have been the heroes on such occasions, speak of the matter with great self-satisfaction, and let no opportunity escape of relating the most minute details. It might be concluded that a complete state of social disorganization would be the result of all this. It is quite otherwise, and the reason may be gathered in the predominance of the aristocratic principle in the midst of this democratic effervescence. These elections are not made by the people, but sold by them to the better classes of society, who buy them so dearly that they can only fall to the lot of those whose rank gives them a deeper interest in maintaining order and upholding the institutions of the country. Strip the English elections of their venality, and you will have popular returns and pure democracy. The thirst of wealthy people for this kind of parliamentary distinction, which,

in compensation for their ruin, affords them only the barren honour of having a well-stuffed seat in the House, on which they may stretch themselves to sleep every night, is indeed extraordinary. It cannot be that they hope to obtain lucrative office, for this in general is reserved to merit; and it is difficult to believe that the privilege of making two or three speeches during the session, which are lost amidst the noise of conversations, can afford any satisfaction to a sensible mind.

That which elsewhere is called consideration, possesses little weight in such a country as England.

Thanks to the influence exercised over the elections by men remarkable by their fortune and their social position, a powerful and truly patriotic aristocracy, which has taken deep root in the soil, maintains its influence, and affords support to the government of the country. The expenses incurred at elections bring in their train other advantages: they prevent accumulation, and fix a limit to wealth, which, under other circumstances, might become boundless. Thanks to the combination of these two

principles, however reproved they may be by liberal theories, the national representation of England is based on the superiority of rank and fortune.

It would be difficult to give the people of France an adequate idea of the enormous expenses of certain of the English elections; there are some among them which cost 50,000, 80,000, or even 100,000*l.* sterling, (1,200,000, to 2,400,000 francs.) When these expenses are not defrayed by the family or friends of the candidate, heavy debts, and sometimes complete ruin, are the deplorable consequences: the embarrassed candidate then resigns himself to the fate of living penuriously in some obscure corner of the Continent, and of travelling all his life on the tops of diligences. This is the retribution for the expensive pleasure of having posted down to the hustings some few hundreds of electors whose votes proved of no use to him. The body politic, however, is here the gainer: it preserves its form and strength—it prospers, and that is the chief consideration.

Woe to England the day when *her* electors

become too honest to sell themselves, and her senators too wise to buy her voters—a revolution will then be near at hand; and the elements which England contains within her own bosom, and which a disorganizing faction reserves for the terrible work, are not less formidable than those which for forty years have agitated France.

DINNER AT * * * * COLLEGE.

It was an election day, but it was a gentlemanly election, at which no votes, or at least very few, were sold; at which neither insults nor blows were exchanged between the parties; at which no windows were broken; where the proceeding was limited to insignificant cabals, or to a calculation of votes, the number of which was known beforehand. The fellows * entertained the electors who had

* The fellows are a species of secular canons, who receive, as the reward of studies more or less successful, allowances of 400*l.* 600*l.* and even 1000*l.* a-year, from the surplus of the revenues of the College to which they belong, without any other conditions than to remain bachelors, after seven years to take orders, and to exercise hospitality during their noviciate.—*Note of the Author.*

There are law and travelling fellows of both Universities, who are laymen.—*Note of the Translator.*

been of the college. Though I was a stranger, thanks to the polite efforts of two of my friends, one a Whig the other a Tory, I found myself seated between them at dinner, on which occasion I had the opportunity of exercising that complaisance which I have imposed on myself as a law in all that relates to the political interests of Great Britain.

We were received in an immense room, of very pure Gothic architecture, decorated with the portraits of illustrious men who had been educated within these walls. The windows, adorned with beautiful stained glass, are for the most part due to the liberality of the pupils of the college. The tables retain the forms of those common in the refectories of Catholic monasteries. They are of sufficient length to give ample space to four hundred guests. We were about three hundred. The dinner was quite *à l'Anglaise*, that is to say, soups strongly peppered, enormous joints of meat, magnificent dishes of fish, and all varieties of puddings. The whole was washed down with Spanish, Portuguese, and French wines, seasoned by political conversation.

"The dinner is good, but it is not cheerful," said my left-hand neighbour, who belonged to the losing party; "every one laments the results of the election."

"It appears to me," said I, "that the successful and numerous majority have reason enough to rejoice."

"Your friend makes wry faces," said my right-hand neighbour, with a smile. "To the health of our King and of our Members—long live the old constitution and good fellowship!" so saying, he emptied his glass, and, as each man followed his example, the company were already very animated when they prepared to pass into the room specially devoted to drinking. In this apartment decanters and glasses, laid out on mahogany tables, awaited the guests; but, as these immense supplies did not suffice for stomachs of such marvellous capacity, and as the occasion was one of those rare occurrences which revived in all their integrity the force of old English customs, the sideboards were still farther covered with bottles, while the servants, cork-screws in hand, rivalled the activity of the bibbers who put

their services in requisition. The company soon began to speak and drink together. Toasts and discussions followed. At length heads began to wax warm, brains became disturbed, and limbs refused to do their office, to such a point as to render the aid of waiters necessary for some of the guests, who were removed in this condition to their inns, and afterward to their beds, by this convenient aid. On such occasions as these, innkeepers in England never fail to bestow on their guests every mark of attention and interest.

A PUBLIC MEETING.

THE most important occurrence in the minds of the English people, next to an election, is a public meeting. Here they deliberate on the laws, blame the acts of the Ministers, authoritatively pronounce an opinion upon every thing, and return home, convinced that they have done the finest things in the world. At a public meeting, John Bull thinks *his* will supreme; because *his* thoughts respond to the words of the orator, he fancies the inspiration of the latter comes from himself, his brother shopkeepers, and the rabble. Therefore it is that the mob affect an air of importance, while their orators, dressed in black, with white gloves, proceed in pairs with a grave step through the crowds of the lowest classes, (barely covered by their filthy

rags,) who follow them with vociferations to the place of meeting. The object of this meeting is announced some days before by placards printed in large letters, which cover the walls, or are carried on the tops of poles through the streets.

The meeting generally takes place in the open air. Mounted on a scaffolding erected in the most conspicuous place, or on a waggon procured for the occasion, stand forth the principal performers who intend to speak. From such a locality, in a style quite worthy of the auditory, they submit their propositions, supporting them by the most extravagant speeches, the falsest assertions, and all manner of abusive language. "Do you know what Reform is?" said one of those furious talkers; "if you do not, I will tell you. It is bread for the poor at a penny a pound, beer at two pence a pot, meat at four pence, plenty of work, double wages, warm clothing, shoes and stockings, and comfortable habitations. We shall have no more customs and excise, no more taxes, no more policemen. (Thunders of applause.) No, we shall have no more of these idle vagabonds,

dressed up in blue, who knock you down with their loaded staves on the first show of resistance; every one henceforth will be rich, happy, free. All these advantages had been ours long ago if the Oligarchy, the Aristocracy, the House of Peers, the boroughmongers, the clergy, and, above all, the bishops, had not opposed themselves to the accomplishment of the wishes of our friends—of those friends who know and defend our interests." The remainder of this speech, which lasted two hours, (English orators are very prolix) was of this complexion. Other Tribunes of the People succeeded, repeated the same phrases, coupling their promises with threats and abusive language, until the period arrived for the reading of a petition, written beforehand, containing an expression of the wants and wishes of the meeting. The proceeding terminated with its unanimous adoption.

The speakers at English popular meetings are not applauded for their matter or their argument, (either of which, by the by, few of their auditory would understand,) but for their intemperate declamation. They swing about

from side to side, stamp their feet and clench their fists; their eyes appear ready to start from the sockets, their mouths foam,—they have, in a word, the air of people possessed. The enthusiasm of the crowd is then at its height; cries of "Hear, hear!" proceed from all sides; the flags are lowered, and the petition is signed on tables, on hogsheads, on knees, on bent backs, which serve as writing-desks. In order to accelerate this operation, sheets of paper are distributed, and when they are covered with signatures, they are joined together and united to the petition. Of the ten, twenty, or thirty thousand individuals who contributed to swell the meeting, two or three hundred, at most, had an interest in the objects of the petition, or the faculties necessary to the comprehension of it, or the right to deliberate at all, for in general the respectable classes do not appear at these meetings. The rest of the assembly could not have heard the orators, whose voices, however powerful they may be on ordinary occasions, are drowned by the noise, which repels the sounds back on the speaker, and prevents

those nearest to him from collecting their purport.

This picture is not overcharged; public meetings are composed of the lowest and the most inflammable classes, of the classes least susceptible of being guided by reason, or of appreciating a measure in its relative adjuncts of good and evil. They are, in general, subservient to the will of a turbulent, unquiet, and dangerous party, and are wielded to maintain the popularity of demagogues. Nevertheless, this manner of consulting the opinions of the people finds apologists among well-intentioned, enlightened, and, in other respects, sensible men. These men would blush to figure in the crowd of auditors, and would be still more ashamed to appear on the hustings by the side of firebrands who seek to inflame the popular passions; but they proclaim the wisdom of deliberations proceeding from a sink in which the mire and mud of the nation ferment together. This is one of the numerous errors—one of the many follies of otherwise sensible people.

A RADICAL PROCESSION.

I AM just returned from a sight which might have amused, had not the smile of contempt which it provoked been mingled with uneasiness and sinister forebodings. It was a popular procession. What was the object of this procession? It was a visit which the million wished to pay to his Majesty; a few words which they would exchange with the Sovereign on their reciprocal interests. You should know that, at this time of day, there are two distinct sovereigns in constitutional monarchies; one is the People, or the real sovereign, the other is the King, or the titular one. The real sovereign, his Majesty the People, all absolute though he piqued himself on being, displayed no pride on this occasion. In very bad wea-

ther, indeed, he was content to walk through the mud. His clothes, it is true, were not such as could suffer much injury:—torn pantaloons, waistcoat in rags, catskin cap, shoes—I am not sure whether his Majesty wore shoes: in a word, he appeared in his appropriate dress.

Thus equipped, he proceeded, surrounded by some hundreds of children, who shouted, and forced all passers-by to join in the shout. Banners, lined with black crape, preceded his *cortège*. This was an indispensable ceremony. The House of Lords had thrown out the Reform Bill; the Sovereignty of the People was sad, in ill-humour; every one, of course, must be discontented and grumble. Such is the caprice of omnipotence, whether it be seated in a palace under a canopy, or strutting in the street under an umbrella!

The shops were shut the moment the *cortège* came within view. From one extremity of Regent-street to the other, it was but a clanking of window-shutters and blinds, just as the lowering of a dark cloud is the forerunner of the hail-storm. All took shelter within doors:

they who did not find the doors open quickly for them, escaped by the side streets. Since Europe has begun to break her chains, Asiatic habits are becoming rife. When the sovereign appears, people tremble and hide themselves. In Asia it costs a man his head. In Europe, when his Majesty is kindly disposed, one may escape with the loss of all one's property; for his Mightiness is wonderfully quick in making transfers. Some who are hard to please were murmuring; they were astonished at a constraint to which people bow down in Paris, because there Liberty and her sweets have long been familiar to them, but which still causes surprise in London.—"Formerly," they said, "when the King passed by, instead of shutting our shops, we stood at our doors; the Royal presence attracted a crowd, which entered our show-rooms. But now, we are obliged to barricade our houses lest our windows should be broken"—"Silence! The sovereign you speak of is not the King. One can say any thing to the latter; but the other sovereign, the Sovereign People, is not so tractable. Take my advice; be silent, and remain

at home." And the good brother-shopkeepers withdrew, discontented at having to remain idle on a day which is not marked as a holiday in the calendar, and at being precluded from selling a yard of cloth or a pound of candles.

The bellowing, howling sovereign, who not only shouted himself, but compelled the by-standers to shout, advanced in four or five files; for, you must know, he is a many-bodied being. A mathematician who was near me, calculated that, from the head to the tail of his Majesty, there was a distance of 1221 feet; that, from his left to his right side, there was a distance of nineteen feet; and that, in granting to each of the fractions which composed the body, a space of 2½ feet to move about, a division of this sovereignty into 6000 particles would be the result. This calculation, which I myself verified, appeared of the most exact precision. I hastened to take a note of it, by way of refuting the somewhat exaggerated computations of certain journals, who never look at the Sovereign People unless through a microscope, which immeasurably magnifies his proportions. My calculator added, that sup-

posing the good pleasure of the Sovereign People that forbade labour, or the curiosity which attracted the crowd in his footsteps, had the effect of rendering idle a tenfold number of individuals, if the mean product of each man's labour or earnings be rated at 10s., it would produce an aggregate loss of 30,000*l.* sterling, or 720,000 francs. "And," said he, "there are few whims of real kings which cost so dearly in one day, whether in money or otherwise." This course of reasoning was not without force, but it lacked respect, nay, it savoured even of blasphemy, towards the Sovereign People. I hastened away as quickly as I could, for fear I should hear more of this treason, and be accused as a party in some plot or conspiracy.

There were all sorts of ingredients in the composition of the strange monarch: there was the directing portion, the part directed, the part not to be directed. The first portion gave the movement until its acceleration, becoming irresistible, should re-act upon the moving power. The directed portion marched on without knowing what precise object the

movers had in view, nor to what place they would be conducted; but they felt at once proud and astonished at the importance given to them by a piece of blue riband stuck in their button-holes. As to the third class, (and it was by far the most numerous, the most menacing, the most abandoned, and the most noisy,) it gave serious cause of uneasiness to the two other parties. It was in honour of this third party that the peaceable shopkeepers closed their windows, preserving only a small aperture through which they might put out their heads to see what might happen. The two other parties would have willingly prayed this portion of the sovereignty not to exercise its rights; but it was not willing to remain idle, and, whether with or without leave, it claimed to have a share in the representation.

What, then, was the object of this solemn procession? Nothing, or almost nothing. The Sovereign People went to tell the King, that they had just discovered the Constitution needed modification; that there was in the state a body of people who endeavoured to maintain an order of things to which England

was indebted for the slavery, the abasement, the misery, all the evils, in short, which, as every one knows, oppress that poor country; that the resistance opposed by this body to a very moderate Reform, no doubt, since it limited its range to the destruction of some institutions, and to the modification of all others," did not permit the people any longer to groan under such tyranny; that it was necessary to put an end to this state of things; that as to religion, which had its advantages and its disadvantages,—the clergy, who hoodwinked the people, and took care to be richly rewarded,—the Peers, who battened on the substance of the people,—the corporations, who possessed properties of an immense value,—and the wrongful possessors of those unwieldy fortunes which are the cause of such wide-spread misery,—as to the nobility, to privileges, to power, &c.—to all these the people would presently turn their attention.

After this splendid harangue, the Sovereign People respectfully saluted the King, and marched out, not without looking around, and instituting a comparison between the gildings

which decorated the apartments of the one King, and the cobwebs which garnish the garrets of his many-headed Majesty; nor without exclaiming against the excessive riches of the one, and the extreme misery of the other, and promising to amalgamate them together, so as to produce a more equal division; nor without forming projects and wishes, as well as cherishing the hope of giving them effect at a future day.

In withdrawing from the Royal presence, the "Sovereign People" might have exclaimed with Titus, "*Diem perdidi*,"—I have lost a day: for if he had done no harm, he had certainly done no good. Notwithstanding his lost day, the Roman Emperor could indulge in a good dinner; but I am compelled to think, that a great number of the fractions composing the Sovereignty I have been speaking of, were without this indispensable meal, seeing, that on this day they had earned nothing, and laid their hands upon nothing which they could appropriate to their own use.

A PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE.

I LONGED to be present at a Parliamentary debate, and to have an opportunity of establishing a comparison between the manner in which our neighbours (who are represented as our masters in matters of representative Government) manage their affairs, and the form which we give to our Parliamentary debates. A small ticket, without a signature,* but on which a Member of the House declared that he was authorized by the Speaker to introduce me, procured my admission to the benches raised in amphitheatre on either side of the entrance under the gallery.

* The author is mistaken. These slips of paper contain the initials of the Speaker under the name of the Stranger, which is written by a member.—TRANSLATOR.

The House is of an oblong form. The Speaker's chair stands in front of the principal door. Its abrupt projection allows a space sufficient for several benches behind it. Before the chair is a table covered with books, registers, boxes for papers, and an enormous gilt mace. Three clerks in bar gowns and wigs are seated at the table with their backs to the Speaker.

The latter, enveloped in a species of gown, (his countenance muffled in a grey wig, extending under his chin and descending below his breast,) converses almost without interruption with Members who approach, and appear to address him with much deference. Occasionally, when the noise of conversation is too audibly heard, he cries out with a loud voice, "Order, order," after which he appears to relapse into his habitual inattention.

The Members are seated on cushions of black leather, which line every side of a room badly lighted by chandeliers filled with wax candles. The brown oak with which the House is panelled, contributes to render the effect more sombre. The vacant benches serve as

beds to such members as spread themselves out to sleep. A projecting gallery, with a cornice supported by iron pillars, is raised on either side over the floor, and in crowded houses supplies, in some sort, the insufficient space of the body of the house. It is here* that the public (without a Speaker's order) are admitted for half a crown a head, together with the newspaper reporters.

On comparing the extent of the House with the number of its members, the question naturally arises how they can find room, to the number of six hundred and forty-six, within so small a space.

The members are dressed in the most careless fashion, in frock coats, in boots, with their hats on, or with an umbrella under the arm. They listen to few of the speeches. They but repeat the cry of "Hear, hear," with intonations which give to the words, alternately, a meaning of approbation or disap-

* To neither of these galleries are the public admitted. They are reserved exclusively for members. The public are admitted only to the back gallery over the bar of the House.—TRANSLATOR.

probation, as they perceive their friends, who have heard the speaker, cheering ironically or in earnest. They talk, move about, cross the room, without attention to him who speaks, or to those who listen. It is the custom not to leave the house without turning towards the Speaker, and bowing to him with becoming respect.

Strangers do not fail to enquire the names of the most prominent members. It is a consequence of the indefinable inclination which one feels to give credit to those who offer resistance to power, as though such resistance always had its principle in honourable sentiments, that one generally begins by asking for the opposition members. Mr. O'C—— is pointed out, an individual whom one would not easily discover under his brown wig, his portly figure, and calm air; any more than Mr. H——, who sits beside him, with a respectable carriage and that grave physiognomy which would become a gentleman.

After being made acquainted with the countenances of the most renowned members of each party, curiosity is directed towards the

ministers, who are neither distinguished by any peculiarity of costume, nor by any other seats than those which usage has assigned to them on the right of the Speaker, and near the table. Their supporters are grouped behind them.

After having seen the interior of the House of Commons, one easily accounts for there being, if not so many distinguished orators, at least so many speakers who express their ideas with tolerable facility. The cause is partly owing to the kindness and indulgence of the house, and partly to its inattention. These double causes render the speakers more careless in the choice of their expressions, and indifferent to the effect they produce. The worst that can happen to them is, not to be listened to. In consequence of this, they speak in the commencement of their career with great boldness, and presently custom supplies them with the oratorical forms and with self-confidence; finally they acquire talents and a reputation. Should it turn out otherwise, they remain in their mediocrity; but they can always sustain a discussion, and, in contending with their op-

ponents, they are no longer under the restraint of a timidity which would paralyse their intellectual energy.

English orators speak extempore, many of them from notes; but these should seldom be consulted, if they wish to avoid unceremonious interruptions. They are not very graceful in their declamation; the greater part of them speak leaning on their umbrellas,* with their hats in their hands, or playing with a whip or a cane. Some, however, are distinguished by a noble and animated gesture. Each person speaks without quitting his place. It is only when a member proposes to take an active part in the discussion that he places himself on the lower benches, near the Speaker, to whom the members are always supposed to address themselves.

In England, as well as in France, the laws would lose much of their imposing character, if one were to consider all the trivial and minute circumstances that mingle in their composition.

* Though we have been very constant attendants at St. Stephen's, yet we have never witnessed this practice.—TRANSLATOR.

In France, the Members of the Chamber have the air of men possessed: the place where they meet is in the form of a theatre, and from the cries that one hears on all sides, one would think they were about to cut each other's throats. In England, the smoky chamber called the House of Commons is in perfect harmony with the slovenly dress and still more slovenly manners of members sent there by the strangest, the most irrational, and, according to report, the most venal elections. In the one country, people profess dangerous principles and subversive doctrines, giving expression to them in eloquent phrases, and without the least consideration of the consequences; in the other, business is transacted with good sense and simplicity. No impediments of self-love are suffered to mingle with considerations of public duty. On which side of the strait is the public weal best understood? I hesitate not to pronounce, and facts justify my opinion, in favour of the English system.

CLUBS.

EVERY national mania, every endemic taste is represented by a Club. Thus there is the Travellers' Club, where you can only be admitted on proving that you are a foreigner, or that you have travelled five hundred miles on the Continent; the Beef-steak Club, where you only partake of the dish giving its name to the club; the Navy Club, and the Military, where sailors and soldiers are alone admitted; the Athenæum Club, consecrated to scientific people; the Catch Club,* which takes its name

* The following account furnishes some interesting details relative to the habits and rules of the Catch Club.

Admitted to one of the meetings of this club, I remarked, in the middle of the room, a tall man of slender figure, whose tone and air indicated a habit of superiority. He was discussing, in a very animated manner, the relative merits of two composers, with a fat man with a hollow

from certain national airs sung by several voices, without accompaniment, during dinner. At Edinburgh there is the Six Feet Club, to be a member of which it is an essential condition

voice and common-place manners: I learned that the first was the Duke of ——, and that the other sang the counter-tenor parts at Covent Garden Theatre. The dinner being announced, the duke, to whom I was presented, made me sit near him, and deigned to inform me that to fulfill, without inconvenience to the members of the club, the condition which prescribes that there should be singing after dinner, a certain number of professional people was invited, to whom the title of honorary members, and a dinner free of expense, were given each time they were invited. These *artistes*, said the duke, enjoy all the privileges of members, and one of these privileges being the right of discussion, they use this privilege with the same freedom towards a nobleman as they would towards one of their brother actors. The dinner, which commenced at half-past four, lasted about two hours, including the dessert, which consisted of various cheeses and dry and green fruits. Boxes containing small music-desks and sheets of music were then placed on the table. I was about to lay hold of one of these sheets, when the duke stopped me, saying, that the placing of this music on the table was a mere matter of form, but that it was forbidden to touch it under penalty of fine. The singing commenced by a prayer, which was chanted standing, and with a gravity of demeanour which was an indispensable part of the performance. One is obliged to join in this chaunt, or to appear to do so.

After four decanters have made the round of the table

that you be six feet high, (about five feet six inches of France); then there is the Jockey Club, and the Greyhound Club, for the lovers of horses and hounds, and a number of establishments of a similar kind.

from left to right, and from guest to guest, they are returned to the president, who asks of the first guest the name of a lady as a toast. This name, which is never distinctly pronounced, is generally that of an actress or a dancer. Drinking is resumed, and the singers commence a catch or a glee. When a member wishes to take part in a catch or glee, the singers place themselves near him. The same ceremony is repeated to each guest. The number not being less than thirty, one can form an idea of the number of glasses of wine and of songs which are dispatched on these occasions.

For some instants this music is insupportable. To the fatigue produced by its monotony is soon joined the inconvenience of an increase of discordance and of singing out of tune. As a guest, however, you must submit to be saturated with this music from six till nine o'clock. To leave the room before nine o'clock would be an unpardonable rudeness. Some intrepid amateurs prolong these sittings till midnight; they then order grills strongly spiced and peppered, together with oysters, which they wash down with Madeira and Sherry. Between two and three o'clock in the morning they regain their homes, some of them ill supported on their reeling limbs, others in hackney-coaches, the drivers of which lie in wait for this sort of customers, to whom they are ever forward in offering their indispensable services.

Each Club has its particular usages, conformably to the end of its institution; but there are rules which are common to all: such are, the mode of admission, a minute observance of the rules and regulations, reciprocal politeness of the members, a tariff of prices, &c.

The Clubs in general are large and well situated houses; the furniture is adapted to the uses to which it is destined. Newspapers are spread on the tables in great numbers, and libraries (which are attached) offer a never-failing resource. Baths and dressing-rooms are also at the service of the members, and it is common enough to see the *habitués* of the Clubs arriving in the morning, and passing there the rest of the day, thus making the Club their house, and its members their family.

Clubs are, for the greater part of the members, but a species of *Restaurans*, where they dine, read the newspapers, or spend their useless time in idle conversation, play, or sleep. You enter the rooms wearing your hat, approach the table to read a newspaper, (often content to read the title only,) or you give yourself the appearance of running over the

matter, in presenting your hand to this person with a distracted air, and nodding to that. Then you throw yourself into a large arm-chair, with a thoughtless vacant air; after a time you write a few letters, and when you wish to fall quietly asleep, you pass into the library, a room generally devoted to this species of enjoyment.

The dining-rooms of the English Clubs only differ from those of the *Restaurans* of Paris in the amplitude of their proportions, and the *recherche* of their furniture. The cookery is simple, in bad taste, and extremely dear. Fried or boiled fish, enormous joints served every half-hour, and conveyed from table to table that each person may cut his portion off, ragouts, puddings, potatoes, cauliflowers, spinach without sauce, and which is added to the load you have on your plate — these form the ingredients of your dinner. For dessert you have two or three kinds of cheese, and, to wash down all, you may be supplied with porter, ale, beer, French, Spanish, and Portuguese wines.

Well appointed servants in livery are always

at your orders. It is expressly forbidden to give them money.

The considerable expense of these establishments is covered by a fixed sum which each member pays for admission, by an annual payment of smaller amount made by each member, and by the profit had on the articles consumed.

Club habits have necessarily a very considerable influence on the national manners. They are a sort of initiation to political life, less by means of discussions, which are rarely entered on within their walls, than by conversations, in which the most important affairs, relating to the general interests of the country, are treated with depth and justness of view. In clubs, too, you learn the character and talents of the most remarkable public men.

Nor is their effect less sensible on the manners of English women. It accustoms them to a solitary life, to the almost constant absence of their husbands, and thus forces them to seek occupation in the cares which they bestow on their families.

NEWSPAPERS.

WHO is there, from the Peer to the hackney-coachman, who does not read the newspapers? Who is there who is not influenced by them? The man of birth fears them; to the shopkeeper and tradesman they are a necessity, for he finds in their columns an opinion which he would not know how to form for himself: their number is therefore considerable. From London, as from the heart, proceed these grand arteries of the body-politic. On reaching the provinces, they divide themselves, and spread through the smaller arteries the opinions they circulate. These opinions are brought back from the extremities to the centre, by a mechanism resembling that which maintains the pulsation of the human heart. But in the organization of society, as

in the organization of living beings, the parts destined to elaborate the principles of life do not always perform their functions with an equal success. A vicious or acrid flood often causes the limbs into which it penetrates to gangrene: oftener still the false doctrines of newspapers induce disorder in the social body, and bring on its dissolution.

For a long time, the English newspapers limited their functions to the studying of popular opinion. To follow in its wake seemed to have been their object. But in proposing to themselves this end, each person gave to the shade of opinion he had adopted, a colouring, darker or lighter, in proportion to the vehemence or moderation of the principles which he wished to see prevail. The English press, following the example of that of France, has bounded from the extremity to the head of popular opinion. Newspapers now pretend to trace the line which this opinion should follow, and aspire to direct it. They find fault with, denounce, menace one party, while they stimulate another. Rarely is the energy of the English press employed in the service of order.

An incontestable "estate" in the nation, it puts itself in constant opposition to power, saps the bases on which it reposes, and prepares its ruin—a ruin which it will be ready to accomplish altogether, whenever it shall suit the factions, of whom this press is the formidable auxiliary, to dispense with social order. That which the press has already done in France, the press, with a little more time, will do in England! The plan is already matured for a decisive aggression. In the means employed for this object, the English press has not the merit of invention. To attack all that the people were habitually taught to respect,—religion, the monarchy, the Government,—has been, of late, its constant object, and, in order to direct its shafts with surer aim against the persons of priests, of kings, of governors, this press has not hesitated to attack the fundamental institutions of society, and to attempt to overthrow the hierarchy of ranks, the disposition of property, even respect for the Constitution itself. Its next aim has been to excite the popular passions, to whet the appetite of the mass against social superiorities, in pre-

senting to their longing desires a detail of the advantages of which the higher classes are in possession. Nor has it stopped here. It has told the lower classes the course of proceeding they should adopt, revealed to them that which they should demand, advertised them of that which they may easily obtain. It has disclosed to the people their formidable power, broken down the barriers which protected the national organization, and the restraints which kept the multitude in check. Such is the perseverance with which (modified according to locality and the classes upon whom it has to act,) this instrument of evil has proceeded to create the elements of chaos and confusion, without once reflecting what is to be the ultimate result. In France, where they appeal to political passions, the journals declare themselves openly for such or such a faction. In England, where parties are acted upon either by modesty or fear, the newspapers feign to attach themselves only to national interests. Fiery, *piquant*, and conducted with talent in one country, they are in the other argumentative, heavy, and insolent. Everywhere they

are a present inconvenience and a future danger, but nevertheless a *necessity* of the existing epoch.

The English Newspapers present, in their numerous and interminable columns, every thing which can speak to the interests or stimulate the curiosity of their readers. Joined to the advertisements, which generally fill half the paper (and sometimes make the addition of a supplement necessary), are detailed reports of the proceedings of both Houses of Parliament. Then follow extracts from foreign journals—then a correspondence on all that is passing in all quarters of the globe—then a summary, or leading-article, on those points on which the editor wishes to draw attention or deceive the public. A minute account of the causes before the courts of justice—of the murders, executions, and strange events, real or invented; some bad puns, the refuse of the *salons*, complete the motley composition of an English Newspaper.

He who seeks to find in the English newspapers good taste, a spirit of observant criticism, an exact and well-digested knowledge of

the politics of Europe, will be disappointed, for the greater part of the English journals are devoid of these qualities. Those articles which appear in the French papers of all political opinions, and exhibit a union of profound thought and eloquent expression, are seldom imitated in the English. Praise or blame are duly dispensed from these oracles. Insult or praise is administered without reserve or delicacy. But that which most surprises in the press of England, is its absolute ignorance of the position, the interests, the events, the public characters of other countries, and, above all, of France. The judgments pronounced on these points in English newspapers are founded on articles in some French journal of the same complexion; while for a history of persons recourse is had to the *Mémoires de la Contemporaine*, or some production equally worthy of confidence.* These

* The Translator feels bound to dissent from this sweeping censure. The articles on Foreign Affairs in the *Times*, though they disclose no profound views or systematized combinations, are nevertheless written in a pure and classical style, while they often display much research and always a lucid arrangement. On the general politics or conduct of the *Times* the Translator is not called on to give an opinion.—TRANSLATOR.

opinions are always a subject of astonishment to foreigners, even to those most familiar with the ignorance of the writer and the credulity of the reader. Nevertheless, it is from factious newspapers or despicable pamphlets that France is judged by Great Britain.

The severe judgment just pronounced (to which there are honourable exceptions) is applicable only to the daily press. Under the name of Reviews, Magazines, Encyclopedias, outlets are opened to sound criticism, to good taste, and to the higher literature, through which the most distinguished writers give vent to the flow of their genius and the current of their reflections. No country excels England in this kind of production, in which she has as manifest a superiority over France, as France has over England in the composition of her daily journals. The explanation of this will be found in the different character of the two people; with our neighbours, the necessity of labour and reflection; with us, that vivacity, that impulse of the moment, which is natural to us; these sufficiently explain the causes of pre-eminence in the literature of each nation,

and in that species of composition which brings their respective writers into closer resemblance.

In point of truth and impartiality, the daily journals of both countries are on a par. Public Opinion does justice to the claims of both, yet Public Opinion is no less the slave of Journalism in London than at Paris. There are so many people who wish to speak on every subject, and yet so few who, owing to sloth or incapacity, can reason on any one! Hence it is that they are obliged to surrender their judgments to reasonings ready prepared for them, and in the end they persuade themselves that their opinions had not been different, had they been the result of their own reflection. Thus it is that folly favours malevolence, and that states maintain within their bosoms elements which have already destroyed some among them, and which menace others with an approaching ruin!

EDUCATION.

THE varied and well-directed instruction given to the English youth is an idea of very general prevalence; but it will not altogether stand the test of an impartial examination, the result of which will at least prove to us that we should not give so absolute a meaning to the word instruction.

The English are in general cold and sententious: it is hence assumed that they are profound and reflective. They are, perhaps, neither one nor the other. Their lives and habits are too incongruous, their time is too broken in upon, to allow of their giving themselves up to laborious and continued studies. Their early youth is passed in schools and universities: in the former, three or four — in

the latter, five months of vacation, interfere to break the course of studies, to distract the attention, and to favour that taste for dissipation already fostered by the light and ill-directed discipline which prevails in these institutions. There are few young gentlemen of good families who have not horses at command from their infancy, and who do not keep them in the neighbourhood of the establishments in which their education is in course of completion. A part of the time which should be devoted to regular study is thus lost in a species of recreation which gives to the mind as well as the body a tone little in unison with the professed object of a seminary.

There are not in England, as in France, those supplemental helps to the insufficiency of a primary education, which are presented in public gratuitous courses, open to all ages and conditions, and which take their range through all the paths of science and literature. Neither medicine nor law, in England, have special schools devoted to their cultivation; and the pursuit of the higher ma-

thematics is reserved for those who have the power of expending a large sum to avail themselves of the isolated means afforded to attain proficiency.

It is sought to compensate for the inconveniences of this mode of education, by prolonging its duration. By remaining a couple of years longer in the schools, the students lose time without gaining on the side of knowledge, and they thus contract habits and notions wholly inapplicable to their future worldly pursuits. The English, nevertheless, discuss well a vast number of questions, and with a sort of superiority those which relate to their own country. This may be accounted for in their exclusive habit of occupying themselves with such questions, and in their treating them, even to satiety, at their private meetings. Every day, after dinner, a prolonged conversation of several hours affords occasion for expressing your own and hearing other people's opinions on all matters which engage the public attention. Young men thus rectify and perfect their ideas, and supply what they want by the

substitution of materials which have been communicated to them by others. Thus a species of jargon is created, which passes for eloquence in public meetings; and even in both houses of Parliament, in which latter assemblies people have the good sense to speak without looking to effect, and limit themselves to the expression of what they ought to say, just as though they were discussing a point round a table or in a drawing-room.

An essential defect in English education is their unwillingness to move out of the narrow circle within which their ideas have been confined, to go in search of new ones, and above all to obtain more extensive and accurate ideas. There are only two ways in England of seeing and judging of things. One of these is taken up and defended by the daily repeated commonplace expressions;—the English go no farther. They do not attempt to rectify their judgments by that of others. On political matters, they disdain to draw from sources where they would find suitable information. While on the Continent, they must certainly shut their eyes;

and render themselves inaccessible to evidence; so many erroneous notions, so many false ideas on the situation of countries, on the interests of the people, on the character of public men, do they bring back! so much do they deceive themselves on the commonest and most incontestable facts! They travel with opinions already formed, and a firm resolution to admit only into their minds notions in harmony with those preconceived opinions. Faithful to this plan, they cherish their very errors, in support of which they cite all that the spirit of party has said or done in confirmation of them during their travels. It may be predicated that the English have not a critical spirit, and that their general education unfits them to acquire it. This charge may appear severe, yet it must be well-founded, for it is in the mouths of all foreigners who have had the best opportunities of seeing and appreciating Great Britain.

The political meetings, frequent as they are, furnish the occasion and foster the habit of public speaking, not only in the necessary discussions which they continually originate, but also in the custom of toast-drinking so pre-

valent at their periodical dinners. It may be said, in a word, that all domestic customs are an initiation to political customs, and it is to the former the English are indebted for their political education.

Travelling also contributes to give them a variety of information, though perhaps it cannot be said to be very profound. The English see so much that they have much to relate, and it often follows, that the heads of those who have no natural ideas become furnished with recollections of what they have seen. Their education is completed rather in travelling-carriages, and round the festive board, than in the academic groves. One might easily conceive this, if the time which the English devote to completing their education were deducted from the three or four meals which cut up the entire day; from the hunting and shooting parties at which you are surprised to see such a crowd of young people, nay, of children, who ought to be at college instead of in the field. But the evil does not end here, for these youths have their horse-racings, their clubs, to which they hold it indispensable to

belong, and they moreover spend hours in interminable promenades up and down the streets. With the best will possible — with the most cheerful and happy dispositions—they cannot bring to serious studies that permanent and abiding attention, that steadiness and concentration of thought, which such studies require.

The liberal arts are not better understood in England than the exact sciences. Painting and music often appear imperfect attempts, indicating an aptitude which has not the power of developing itself. The study of these arts does not in the least qualify the scholar to pronounce a sound judgment on productions which so few are capable of appreciating. Money is thrown to an artist from ostentation rather than taste, as though one had a desire to be rid of it, or wished to acquire the reputation and title of Protector of the Arts. Accordingly, it is not by specialities or isolated facts that we should judge the merits of the system of education followed in England, because, when compared with particular departments and branches in other countries, it would present an incontestable inferiority. But it is by its general

results—by the influence which this system exercises upon the manners—by the habits of order and subordination which it establishes and supports—by the actual condition of England itself, that such a system should be appreciated. If it does not produce *savans* who overturn the institutions of their country, to get themselves talked of, and to find employment for their dangerous talents, it forms useful citizens, familiarized with the interests of their country, and seeking to preserve them in the perpetuation of existing institutions.

All considerations taken into account, it must be admitted that a student of Oxford is to be preferred to a student of the Polytechnic School.

FINE ARTS.

PREPOSSESSED as we may be towards England, we are bound to admit that in respect to the fine arts she is inferior to the least favoured nations. Perfection in them is hopeless without that natural tact, that impulse of taste, that yielding to rules of general assent, which are incompatible with the education and independent opinions of Englishmen. If true to nature, and faithfully pourtraying it, theirs is a literal copy, which discards its nobler features. They never attempt an interpretation of it distinguished by its more dignified character, and free from those incidents which degrade without giving it a greater impress of truth. The national taste favours and encourages this slothfulness of imagination, which

confines artists to the description of mere facts, divested of every suggestion of fancy. Their efforts, when they endeavour to shake off the trammels of habit, tend exclusively to exaggerate the defects of the objects they desire to represent. Thus it is that their imagination, instead of soaring above the common level, falls powerless at every attempt; accordingly their drawing produces a caricature, their theatre a tragedy or comedy alike at variance with all rules, their music a mere sound, their architecture a Buckingham House or the Brighton Pavilion.

PAINTING.

How can a different result be expected, when the talents of artists could only be chastened and improved by that public taste which is not to be found in England? Connoisseurs in objects of art are few among the English. Fashion or caprice guides them in the purchase of a picture. The pretended connoisseurs, the purchaser himself, set a value upon it in proportion to its cost; and the circumstances which usually determine its price, are a som-

bre colour disguising every other object, the name of the supposed artist, the gallery understood to have contained it, if an old painting,—if a modern one, the thickness of the colours, their heavy coating upon the canvass, the incorrectness of the lines (a defect which is graced with the name of freedom), a capricious composition, laying claim to originality, and especially to national character. A dearly purchased picture, however glaring its faults, is classed amongst the most valuable in a collection. The cicerone who points it out is careful to name the author; he is answered by an admiring exclamation; he tells the sum of money it has cost; the picture is forthwith examined in the smallest details; the beholder takes a distant view, then a nearer one; he closes an eye, places his hand before the other in the form of a spy-glass, and after spending a quarter of an hour in silent ecstasy, he retires with the utmost gravity, exclaiming, "Sublime! prodigious!" avoiding, however, that analysis which would belie the conventional praise thus bestowed upon certain productions.

The approbation of English connoisseurs is only to be obtained by launching into an exaggerated style even in those subjects to which it is least adapted. Chasteness of form and figure is deemed affectation, correctness of design is qualified as stiffness, delicate colouring as an obstacle to the general effect. An adherence to truth in the adaptation of the colours would unquestionably find as little favour with judges so difficult to please, since the greater part of their paintings are wholly devoid of it.

The correctness of these observations is remarkably illustrated by the public expositions. Out of a thousand paintings which decorate the walls of many spacious and well-lighted apartments, there are to be found six or seven hundred portraits of all kinds, whose attitudes and drapery indicate an extraordinary pretension to originality on the part of the painters, as well as of the individuals whose portraits they have drawn. The resemblance, rather understood to exist than admitted as accurate, is chiefly owing to an evident exaggeration, to the very contortion of the features of the persons who sat for their portraits.

Historical paintings, in the composition of which are introduced, as bearing a closer affinity to truth, the most minute details and the most insignificant episodes—scenes of domestic life—a few landscapes relieved by representations of hunts or races—allegorical subjects, sea or land fights,—such are the paintings which complete a collection unblushingly exposed to the conventional enthusiasm, rather than to the sober judgment of the public. If the English have made up their minds to consider the talents of their painters as affording specimens of all that is correct, perfect, and sublime in the art, they should exclude foreigners from admission to their museums. They would then spare their artists the mortification of exciting the pity of the connoisseurs of every other country, and escape the reproach of suffering themselves to be blinded by a prejudice which paralyses their judgment, so correct on many other subjects.

There are a few signal exceptions to this censure. A connoisseur has a wide field wherein to gratify his admiration; he cannot fail to contemplate with delight certain paint-

ings displaying a distinguished talent in composition, drawing, and colouring, and standing as the protests of a few artists who have the courage to resist the torrent of bad taste, and to establish themselves in some sort as landmarks, to point out the road leading to all that constitutes beauty and correctness in their art.

The English have obtained a well-merited fame in water-colour painting. Whether it be owing to the circumstance that this order of painting does not admit of a high degree of perfection, and that, being less attended to in other countries, there exists no means of instituting a comparison, or that the defects inherent to it have some analogy with those usually imputed to the English style, such as a harshness of colouring, a vagueness in the details, an incorrectness of design, a want of accuracy in the contours,—these are points which it is difficult to decide; certain it is that, in England, this species of composition approaches much nearer to that of nations the most distinguished by their patronage of the fine arts than she can lay claim to in respect to oil-painting.

ENGRAVINGS.

There is so much in England to find fault with, in all that relates to the Fine Arts, that it is a pleasure to have the opportunity of giving unqualified praise to one of their most important branches. Copper-plate engraving, and more particularly that style known under the appellation of "the English manner," may be said to rival the most perfect productions of other nations, as it may claim a marked superiority over the general run of their productions. A labour of patience and manual dexterity, this profession agrees with the national habits. It receives many and numerous encouragements in the facilities afforded by speculations of a secondary order, but of assured success, which reconcile the interests of the artists with their reputation. The tool which has worked on the material of a great composition, reposes from the fatigues of its labour in tracing on a plate of small dimension a landscape destined to adorn a keepsake, or illustrations of the edition of an author already in vogue. These admirable productions,

distinguished by the combination of grace, finish, and taste, have an assured sale. Ordered beforehand, and paid for at a high price, they afford the artist the means of waiting, without anxiety for the present, the price reserved at some distant date for a long and painful labour; and if they do not establish his reputation, they at least contribute to his comfort, and allow him to bestow greater care on the finish of those *chefs d'œuvre*, which recommend his name to his own age and to posterity.

Engraving on precious stones has also attained a perfection not sufficiently noticed, because it only exercises itself on objects of trifling value and of common use; but if, in place of limiting its exercise to the carving of coats of arms on seals, this branch of the art elevated its views to the historical style, it would attain a perfection equal to the most approved models which antiquity has handed down to us.

SCULPTURE.

Sculpture, encouraged by a more positive patronage, and the demands for the numerous public edifices, and confined within a narrower range than painting, is cultivated in England with tolerable success. Criticism, which has had to find fault with the vicious composition of many of its works, may speak with more indulgence on the expression of the heads, on the truth of the attitudes, on the boldness with which the national costume has been employed, and the nobleness which has been given to it in spite of the little developement of the draperies. Westminster, St. Paul's, Trinity College at Cambridge, and the Chapel Royal at Windsor, present grand, vast, and sublime compositions. Antique sculpture has left no more beautiful conception than the statue of Newton at Cambridge, by Roubillac. Nor would it disavow the tombs of the Duke of Argyle and of Mrs. Nightingale at Westminster, by the same artist. Those of Nelson and Chatham, and many monuments of the same kind at St. Paul's, and the

admirable mausoleum of the Princess Charlotte at Windsor, are works of rare merit, of which countries, having the best-founded pretensions to superiority might well be proud. Bronze is, or appears to be, less favourable than marble to the display of the talent of English statuaries. The public squares are furnished, rather than ornamented, with statues of ordinary merit, some of which have even a ridiculous effect. The appearance of these statues is soon rendered disagreeable by a cloud of black dust, (the deposit of coal-smoke,) which defaces the details. From the obliteration of the parts, as well as from the colour, you would mistake the material for cast iron instead of bronze. It may be added, that the general effect of statues, almost always out of proportion with the places where they are exposed to view, little disposes the connoisseur to pronounce an opinion in favour of the artist.

ARCHITECTURE.

In classifying the relative degree of imperfection of the fine arts in England, architecture should be placed still lower than painting.

It is almost reduced to the routine of heaping brick upon brick, without farther order or symmetry than that necessary to create openings for doors and windows. If a house should be too small, another is built at the side of it, out of harmony with the first. English architects do not hesitate to place a beam on an arch, a small window by the side of a wide door, or a chimney at the angle of a building. Do they wish for ornaments? they can only find columns; they do not trouble themselves either with their proportions or their props. Their height is determined by the elevation of the edifice. They are placed on a cornice or on a balcony, with as little motive as there would be for placing them underneath: they are indifferently employed in ornamenting a shop, a palace, or a cottage.

Nor can even the praise of imitation be accorded to English architecture. Witness the triumphal arch of the Green Park, and that of the palace destined to become the royal residence — a bold defiance of bad taste. One is tempted to ask, where the English can have conceived the idea of St. Paul's, when one sees

so many ridiculous edifices heaped round this *chef-d'œuvre.*

The internal arrangement of the houses is in keeping with the poverty of their external decoration. The system is exactly the same for the house of a lord as for that of a tradesman; the difference exists only in the proportions. The taste of the architect goes for nothing in the ornamental portion. When he has built four walls so fragile that the roll of a carriage produces a general crepitation, placed horizontally, as well as perpendicularly, separations which form ceilings and partition-walls, and added to these a narrow staircase of difficult ascent, which communicates with the three stories of this wretched house, his occupation is at an end.

In order to rival the architect's good taste, an upholsterer generally covers these walls with a paper of a red ground. He furnishes two or three of the rooms in the same colour, places four-post beds in the sleeping-rooms, carpets in all the apartments, and behold an English house ready to receive its inmates! As to looking-glasses, they are rarely met

with, and are generally of small dimensions. If the English wished for clocks, they would find it difficult to place them in apartments without brackets, whose elevated chimney-pieces (four or five feet high) are without shelves.

Instead of being composed of folding shutters, the windows are formed of grooved panels, sliding into each other, and cut out about four feet from the ground. Hence it is necessary to stoop the head to look out; and one is also obliged to bend oneself if one wishes to walk in the narrow balcony before the house.

In looking over the numerous heaps of habitations which have risen round the capital during the last half century, on the sea-coast, and in every place in which there has been a pretext to build, and in examining the architecture employed, it must be acknowledged that, if the English know how to build towns, they do not know how to build houses. This arises from an abundance of capital and a penury of taste.

The propensity for all that is *bizarre* has induced them to adopt with a sort of passion the Gothic architecture. They employ this

style in the building of chateaux and of the most insignificant houses, but they know not how to divest it of its numerous imperfections.

They preserve, in the staircases, the original cramped and narrow dimensions and high steps; in the corridors, the antique darkness and want of breadth; in the façades, the irregularity; and in the whole distribution and arrangement, those inconveniences which may have been overlooked by the unrefined habits of the twelfth century. As objects of perspective, these Gothic structures have a pleasing effect; but as houses are more intended for habitation than to gratify the sight, common sense should point out the propriety of adapting a mansion to the wants and exigencies of existing civilization.

English architects do not succeed any better in the construction of palaces than in the building of plainer dwellings. London and Brighton, as well as other parts of the three kingdoms, offer proofs enough in support of the severe judgment which has been here pronounced.

There is, however, a style in which it would

be unjust to refuse to English architects the praise of very distinguished talent: I mean religious edifices. Far inferior, no doubt, to St. Paul's, but still in an honourable rank, may be placed a crowd of modern churches; some in the Grecian style; others, more especially, in the Gothic. These constructions would do honour to a nation more advanced in the arts than the English. Elegance and justness of proportions — elaborate execution — a design in harmony with the sacred character of the edifice — beauty of situation, are all united in these modern edifices. In the squares of London, as in the picturesque sites of Sussex, or amongst the stately trees of Yorkshire, the traveller halts with pleasure before those noble edifices, which he is surprised to meet in a country having so little to boast of in the way of architecture. He is tempted to ask himself if these structures and the surrounding houses have been the work of the same architects, and if recourse has not been had to foreigners to raise temples to the Divinity.

Although English buildings are *bizarre*, deprived of taste, and at variance with the

most simple rules and combinations of art, they produce, nevertheless, a grand effect to the eye which views them as a whole.

This effect is principally owing to the happy idea of building a certain number of houses seemingly connected together, and having the appearance of one vast building, whose symmetrical architecture, affords the illusion of a palace; to the position of the building, and an occasional irregularity, which permits the most imposing parts to be thrown into projection. This monumental aspect produces astonishment, and might surprise one into admiration, if common sense did not come to the aid of the understanding, and enable it to assign to things their just and proper value.

MUSIC.

The art of music, like that of painting, is appreciated more by the expense which it involves, than by the real enjoyments it affords. Cultivated with little success by the English, it is scarcely followed as a profession, unless by foreigners, the more dearly paid because they seek to find in the money

which they gain, not only a recompense for their talent, but a compensation for the little interest which it inspires.

If English voices afford little gratification, English ears are not over-nice: the one are made for the other; and if, which never happens, the sounds of a sharp voice should distinctly strike the tympanum of an attentive auditory, it would not be affected in a disagreeable manner. By a habit of which people are not aware, and which can only originate in the little pleasure caused by music too often unworthy of attention, people do not listen; and hence it is that an English concert is but a noise of instruments which mingles itself with the noise of conversations, rendered more deafening by the necessity which the talkers lie under of making their voices prevail over those of the singers.

When this *charivari* has lasted the prescribed time, an end is put to it; the artists are dismissed after having been well paid.

If professional music is thus rewarded, one may imagine that amateurs are little encouraged to make this sort of talent available.

They limit themselves to the feeble execution of pieces on the harp or piano, generally accompanied by a flute or the song of romances. Foreigners alone lend a willing attention. As for the English, they continue their conversations quite as much before amateurs as before artists.

English musical compositions are happily rare, and are undistinguished by any nationality of character. Music and musicians, the country-dances, and the orchestras which play them, the very hand-organs in the streets, and the miserable wretches who turn them, all are drawn from the Continent to London. It is, in reality, the wisest plan.

THEATRES.

An examination of the state of the Theatres will conclude the subject of the Fine Arts. The taste or sentiment which imprints a particular direction to talents, although it exercises an influence on the histrionic art, does not, however, operate so injuriously upon it as on the other branches of the fine arts. England possesses a considerable number of comedians,

and is specially distinguished by tragedians of note. Declamation is not, as in France, reduced to a system; it is based on the actor's observation of nature, and would leave little to desire, if it did not frequently descend to too minute details. The *tournure* of male as well as female actors is not sufficiently natural. Their gait is awkward and embarrassed; their address is deficient in suppleness and grace. The actors group themselves with difficulty, and cross the stage with awkwardness. Nothing in their demeanour indicates the study, the idea even of the habits and manners of good society. As a counterbalance to these defects, it must be admitted that they often hit on the just expression of physiognomy and tone. Mediocre in the higher and lighter comedy, they excel in tragedy, which lends itself to a marked declamation, and in low comedy, which permits its votaries to descend to overcharged caricature.

Exceedingly rich in tragic authors of the first order, England is deficient in comic authors of an elevated style, and borrows from France the greater part of the subjects of

the small pieces which are played on her theatres. These lose much of their merit in the mutilation they undergo for the purpose of adapting them to the English taste. Nor are they less deteriorated by translation, and by the manner in which they are played. They want the local application which they had at Paris, but which they cannot preserve in London.

It is in operas, where the poetry as well as the music has been borrowed from French authors, that the difference between the two countries is more sensibly felt. A Vandal, incapable of appreciating a musical idea, draws his pen over a bar of Rossini, of Boyeldieu, of Auber; cuts out whole pieces, and what is still worse, parts of a piece; and when he has reduced it to a convenient size, distributes it to the other Vandals, the singers and orchestra, who execute it in the most barbarous manner before a public who, less intent upon the quality than the quantity, are well satisfied, provided they find occupation from seven in the evening till twelve or one o'clock in the morning.

There is an English Opera in London, but so bad, that even an English public (the least

difficult to please) have pronounced condemnation upon it. Confined to a small theatre, at a season when all the world is out of town, the English Opera serves only as theatrical food to a class not over-dainty. When the great houses open, which offer more attractive entertainment, the English Opera disappears.

A French theatre draws a constant influx of visiters during four or five months of each year. Its stock-pieces are strengthened by a supply from the vaudevilles of Paris; which city also lends the aid of her most remarkable actors, thus rendering supportable the mediocrity of the ordinary troop.

The Opera, or King's theatre, presents an almost exclusive company of foreign *artistes*. The *prima donnas* and *primo tenores* of Italy, and the *corps de ballet* of France, furnish their most distinguished members. These are a species of commodity which the English custom-house laws do not pronounce contraband. Fashion, rather than musical taste, draws crowds to this theatre. The high price of the seats does not permit those who pique themselves on belonging to the fashionable classes to be

absent. The Opera is the best attended theatre in London, not because it is the best, but because it is the dearest.

The interior and extent of the two great English theatres are more remarkable than their architecture or arrangement. The boxes are found fault with for being too deep; the corridors and *sorties*, for being too confined and narrow; and the staircases, because of their steepness and want of developement. The decorations, which vary with almost every scene, have a fine effect, although they do not generally produce the illusion of those of our opera. The costumes are rich, but not correct, and are, moreover, too loaded with tinsel. The abuse of fire-works introduced to illuminate, what in technical language are called "the pictures," has this double inconvenience. In the first place it accustoms the eye to a light which is not in nature; and, secondly, it spreads through the theatre a stink and smoke which remain during the whole representation.

The smaller theatres have, in a relative proportion, the same species of merit and defects

which are observed in the larger houses. Their representations are confined to melodrama, vaudeville, and pieces of trifling comedy. Many of them possess very good actors, and draw that species of audience whose laughter and tears are only to be excited by exaggeration.

What are we to conclude from this severe but strict examination of the Fine Arts in England, but that they are exotic plants, cultivated by national luxury, by the fancy of the moment, by the very expense at which they are produced, and which, up to the present day, it has been found impossible to acclimatise? Children of the imagination, they cannot flourish in a country where that principle of creation, that condition of existence necessary to the production of what is beautiful, grand, and true, is not in existence. England, it will therefore be inferred, is condemned to remain tributary to Italy and France for the Fine Arts. What she has to regret on this head is too amply compensated for, in other respects, to cause her to lament a deficiency of which one need not fear to remind her.

PHYSICIANS.

THE incredulous in the abilities of the professors of the healing art, could find in a comparison of the science as practised in England and in other countries, powerful arguments in favour of their scepticism. In France, for instance, physicians are men of profound attainments in every thing that relates directly or indirectly to their art. Long and painful studies, pursued in schools directed by the most enlightened professors, and possessed of the necessary means to extend the domain of science, initiate them into the mysteries of the art. There is no country in which one should live longer than in France, if the talent of the physician could prolong existence.

In England opportunities of study are rare,

precarious, and costly. There are no other schools than hospitals, no other mode of teaching than the unreasoning observation of practice.* Anatomy supplies the English schools by means as imperfect for science as they are revolting to humanity. The anatomical study of peculiar and organic diseases can be but rarely pursued, in consequence of the prejudices which are opposed to the investigations of science. Hence it results that all is imperfect, as well in the teaching as in the practice of medicine. The duration of human life is nevertheless as long as in France. What conclusion are we to draw from this, but that the science of the physician only contributes in a very feeble degree to the preservation of human life, if his ignorance does not abridge it in a more sensible proportion? In either hypothesis, it is apparent that medicine exercises no very determined influence on the increase or diminution of the human race. The only positive

* It is for this very reason that English physicians are the first in the world. Were they to pursue the French system, they might attain "the bad pre-eminence" of French physicians, who are among the worst of the tribe.—TRANSLATOR.

effect is that produced by the habits, manners, and diet, and the greater or less care taken to combat the inconveniences of climate, of local situation, or of personal position.

If the state of medicine should exhibit a sinister influence as relates to the prolongation of human life, most assuredly it would do so in England. The different causes just indicated are all attended with their effects. The absence of long and continuous study limits medical knowledge to vague and very superficial speculations. Violent remedies derived at random from the pharmacy, and empiricism, are the means resorted to. The result of all is, that a guinea is placed without delicacy in the hands of the doctor, and received without shame, at each visit. The patient is cured in more or less time, according as his constitution is good or bad. It is his affair, not that of the physician.

There exists, under the name of surgeons, a class of men exercising the healing art, or at least that of having patients under cure. In England, remedies are ordered and sold as candles, sugar, or cloth. Surgeons differ from phy-

sicians in this, that they cannot receive fees.* They remunerate themselves by a profit on their drugs. Five or six phials, dearly charged for, and filled with remedies of all colours, boxes of pills, ointments, &c. pass from the shop of the apothecary into the chamber, sometimes into the stomach, but oftener out of the window, of the patient. This is a matter of small moment, provided the apothecary receives the remuneration for his visit and medical advice.

Energetic remedies form the substratum of the prescriptions of English practitioners. Alcohol enters into the greater part of the preparations, and always in the least rational manner. I have seen it administered, in large doses, to a patient hastening to the tomb through a confirmed consumption. It is a part of the treatment prescribed when the patient is convalescent. The abuse of this drug is carried

* It is evident from what follows, that the author speaks of apothecaries, sometimes called surgeon apothecaries. But here is the danger of a Foreigner writing on English customs. A surgeon can not only receive fees, but recover them in a court of law; while a physician has no legal remedy.—TRANSLATOR.

to inconceivable lengths. I know a lady who drinks a pint of brandy a day by the advice of her physician; and wonderful to tell, this regimen has already lasted for six years. Nowhere is the healing art exercised with a more sovereign contempt of the most common rules, with a more absolute disregard of reasoning and common sense, than in England.

It is said that surgery has attained a high degree of perfection, and in support of this assertion, the names of two very rich surgeons are cited. It would be impossible to deny to these individuals the possession of rare talents, if we estimate the latter by the immense fortunes they have acquired.

ENGLISH CLERGY.

No comparison can be instituted between dissimilar objects. It would be folly to institute a comparison between the clergy of France and that of England.

"What is a priest in France?" said a very religious deputy, when delivering himself at the tribune, and whose word may be believed in this matter.—"A priest in France is a simple man, without family, without credit, of little influence, poorly clad in black, who supplies by an inward piety, a great disinterestedness, and a fervent charity, those exterior advantages which are wanting to him. He is not to be met in the salons, because there his qualities are not necessary, and he would find himself misplaced; too often sprung from the lower

classes of society, he opposes, at times, an indiscreet pride to the lowness of his origin. The mediocrity of his fortune, leaves him no other resource for doing good, than to importune those who have wealth to succour those who have nothing."

If one wished to adopt the form employed by this deputy, to give an account of the English clergy, the reply to the question—What is a clergyman in England? — would be as follows. An English clergyman is a man of distinguished birth, surrounded by a numerous family, provided with a rich benefice, living in luxury, participating in every pleasure, in all the enjoyments of the world, playing, hunting, dancing, attending the theatres, neither grave nor serious, unless nature has made him so; he is one who hoards his emoluments in order to settle his children; who spends his fortune in wagering, in horses, in dogs, sometimes (when he is thoughtless and devoid of foresight) with a mistress; in any event, giving little to the poor, and leaving their case, and the fulfilment of duties which he disdains, to some unfortunate curate, who for a miserable stipend is

obliged to exhibit the virtues and to fulfil the duties which the incumbent despises and neglects.

This double portrait of the English and French clergy is perfectly true. The neglect and indigence of which (in consequence of the spread of revolutionary principles and laws) the French clergy have been the victims, have operated to turn from that career those members of honourable families who heretofore recruited the clerical ranks. At present, the zeal of the bishops beats up for recruits among young men of the humblest birth, who, comparing their primitive state of abject and miserable poverty with the prospect of a life less laborious, to which they have been prepared by a semblance of education, and which raises them to a social position less degraded, are led to prefer the cassock of the priest to the smock-frock of the waggoner. After having consecrated some years to the acquisition of indispensable attainments, they leave the seminaries without novitiate, without a study of the world or the spirit of their calling, to oppose, with a sort of brutal awkwardness, the absolutism of their

religious principles to the reasoning independence of their parishioners. Destitute of experience, deprived of that tact which the habits of living in the bosom of a respectable family might have given them, if the lowliness of their condition did not put this advantage out of their reach, they commence a struggle with those they are called on to direct, and a reciprocal malevolence ensues, rendering the interchange of good feeling or good offices alike impossible. Henceforth, it is only by sermons, which are turned into ridicule, or by alms substracted from clerical to administer to still more wretched and more ungrateful poverty, that the presence of the village curate becomes known, and his life is destined to flow on amidst storms, fatigues, and overwhelming privations. Yet is he pursued by envy, as though he were happy and honoured!

Such is not the life of the English ecclesiastic. His career is marked out beforehand; its close is as apparent to him as its commencement. He knows whether his hopes should centre in the possession of a benefice of a thou-

sand or twelve hundred pounds sterling, or whether his ambition may aspire to a mitre. He knows also that, in the least favourable hypothesis, his education and studies, which are never closely scrutinized, will suffice to secure for him an honourable position. His family or friends hold a rich curacy in reserve for him, on which he will reside if he have the desire and the hope of further elevation. If he be anxious to sacrifice future prospects to present pleasures, he will cause the duties of his cure to be performed by a paid curate. A grave and sober course of life, vast theological learning, above all, pulpit eloquence, are indispensable conditions to the attainment of a bishoprick; but though these high qualities are the result of some sacrifices, still the advantages preponderate; each step in the ladder of preferment is accompanied with an increase of wealth, of honour, and consideration, and the courage and perseverance of the aspirant are sustained by the perspective of the honours, the influence, and the large fortune reserved to him who reaches the fortunate eminence.

The Bench of Bishops numbers individuals

as distinguished by their talents as by their morals; too much engaged, however, by their interference in politics as spiritual peers,—too much carried away by their taste for preaching, they do not devote themselves sufficiently to the superintendence of the subordinate clergy, who live in a sort of independence of spiritual authority, and who are only made to feel the existence of discipline, when some outrageous scandal has rendered an act of severity indispensable.

The staid manners of the bishops do not preserve them from habits of luxury and expense; besides an episcopal palace appertaining to the see, and a mansion in one of the most beautiful sites of their diocese, they have houses in London, where the Sessions of Parliament afford them a pretext for residence.

A black dress, but not distinguished in its cut from that of the rest of society, is worn by clergymen of *bon ton*,—by those younger sons of noble families, who only belong to the church in consequence of the fortune it provides for them. These are the priests who are oftener seen at Epsom, Doncaster, and New-

market, at the sporting-parties of Norfolk and Yorkshire, than in the pulpit. The clerical costume interferes in England with none of the enjoyments of the world; those who wear it do not hesitate to appear at balls and routs, or in opera stalls; and they have no scruples at being seen in a box at the Adelphi or the Olympic.

The parish priests, or clergymen on whom the care of souls devolves, find compensation for the fatigues of their profession in an appropriate endowment, and in the pleasures of a less boisterous society. There are few even of these who do not mingle, with their numerous families, and with apparent pleasure, in the mazes of a quadrille or of a country dance.

I have vainly endeavoured to reconcile the severity, with which Protestant clergymen enforce the observance of the Sunday, with the passion of many for the dance. This passion exposes them to the familiarity, often to the railleries, of those to whom they should afford serious example,—to the reproaches of that class to whom they interdict enjoyments which they themselves follow with a sort of delight. It would be better, however, to allow the pea-

santry to dance on the Sunday, than to expose them to the dangerous temptation of expending their time in idleness or drinking.

The country clergy of England are distinguished by severe and irreproachable manners; but their functions, limited to the celebration of the service, do not extend to the distribution of alms. There are very few clergymen who know the number, the names, or the wants of the poor of their parish; these matters they consider as being out of the pale of their obligations. They are not seen leaving their commodious dwellings to sit by the bed of the sick, or to carry to the chamber of death the consolations of religion. These charitable offices might render them subject to the attacks of some contagious disorder; and in the event of their illness or death, they would not be the only victims, since the lot of all that is dear to them is inseparable from their own.

These are considerations which influence not the Catholic priest. He is poor and isolated. Without perceiving that he changes habitation, he passes from the humble dwelling of his ministry to the wretched cabin of the indigent,

From poverty to misery the transition is hardly perceptible. The Catholic priest tastes of the woes he comes to succour. If he is carried off in the midst of his duties, he has little to regret at leaving a world where his lot has been none of the happiest. No one weeps over his tomb, no one suffers from his untimely exit. The idea of the past troubles him not; his thoughts are fixed on the future, and that future is eternity. He faces therefore without fear, almost without reflection, dangers which would be more formidable, if he participated in the enjoyments of life — if he had a wife, children, and all that constitutes worldly happiness.

The fecundity of clerical marriages has become proverbial. When habits of order are conjoined with a high preferment, the fortune of the children of these marriages is almost assured. But it is not always thus. The inconveniences of the contrast between a certain rank in the social scale, joined to a finished education, and the privations of a precarious existence, are sometimes felt. Clergymen's widows commonly obtain asylums in institutions established for

this purpose; their sons turn their education to account; while the daughters seek in the employment of their talents resources which they do not always find. Sometimes they have not the courage to resist proposals too equivocal to be honourable.

I have no doubt that if the question of the celibacy or marriage of the clergy were to be determined on the comparison of what is observed in England and in France, an impartial judge would pronounce in favour of the latter system. He would not hesitate to acknowledge, that with an equal regularity of manners, there results, from a life of celibacy, greater abnegation of the good things of this world, more disinterestedness, and more real charity; whilst greater attachment to this life, more anxious attention to family concerns, less affection for the duties of his calling, less disposition to exercise charity and benevolence, and less means of satisfying these calls, fall to the lot of the married clergy. With every allowance, therefore, for exaggerated opinions, an isolated priest is better for society than a

clergyman attached to all its interests, participating in all its influences, and subjected to all the conditions which it imposes.

If a comparison were instituted between the French and English clergy; if the austere forms of the one — their self-sacrifice — their abnegation of family affection — their inexhaustible charity — if the privations which they impose on themselves to satisfy such claims — if their unfurnished houses, their humble costume, their rigid practice of the severities of religion, were to be contrasted with the easy and comfortable lives of the English clergy — with their anxiety for the present and future happiness of their families and friends — their expenditure in matters not in harmony with their sacred functions — the *recherche* of their furniture, of their dress, and of their equipages — Reason, which would pronounce an impartial decree, and range on the one side a true virtue regardless of sacrifices, and which errs only by a want of tact in the use of means; and on the other a sort of mundane virtue, which has found an easy

way to reconcile a grave calling with manners neither grave nor serious enough for the clerical state, would declare a preference of the humble clergy of the Catholic Church, over the rich and sumptuous pastors of the Protestant Establishment.

RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS.

In England, in that country which the French philosophers of the last century represented to us as a people of *esprits forts*, of unbelievers, caring little for religion; the most profound respect is nevertheless professed for its acts, as well as its most inconvenient practices. Religion is never made a subject of declamation, of pleasantry, or of doubt. Her well-paid ministers exercise a great influence in the country parts of England. Good or bad, the two sermons which they preach every Sunday draw a numerous and attentive congregation. Meals are commenced and terminated by blessings and grace. The bishops sit in the House of Lords by a sort of national

deference, for no law gives them title to a seat.* A religious spirit, then, exists in England.

What is the celebration of the Sabbath in Catholic countries—in those countries which are accused of a blind intolerance? A means of repose, of pleasure even for the lower classes of society; a leisure-time for the better classes; for the one and the other, an opportunity of procuring that relaxation which cannot often be obtained on days dedicated to business or labour. Provided that one or two members of each family appear at the parish church for a quarter of an hour, whether stimulated to do so by real devotion, or out of respect for outward appearances, a duty is performed towards society, which, though not considered indispensable, is applauded as a profession of religious faith. People think they have thus fulfilled their duty towards God, whose ministers require no more.

* This is a mistake. By *Magna Charta* the clergy were to be summoned as well as the nobility and commons. The Spiritual Peers are Lords of Parliament in virtue of certain ancient Baronies held under the king.—TRANSLATOR.

The Sabbath produces in England an absolute suspension of business, labour, and pleasure. Unless at those hours when the monotonous and prolonged jingling of bells call the faithful to prayer, all is sad, motionless, silent. It rarely happens that the rolling of a carriage comes to interrupt the meditations of those who pray, or to distract the *ennui* of those whom custom confines at home. The approach of carriages to church is forbidden during the progress of divine service. All places of public amusement are closed — the most innocent domestic recreations are banished for the day. If the sounds of a piano are heard, it is in accompaniment to Psalms. In many houses, the inmates dine on cold meats, prepared the day before, so that the servants may be relieved from all labour. The reading of a sermon is the only recreation allowed. Will it then be said that a religious spirit does not exist in England?

Hear an Englishman speak of the customs of the Catholic religion, and he will denounce the slavery of the people, and even of kings, to the Papal yoke. According to him, the

prisons are always open to receive the victims of a worship which allows neither opposition, nor the exercise of reason. If he permits the existence of the Inquisition, or of the auto-da-fés, it is as much as he will do. These are religious and national prejudices, which he will transmit intact to his descendants, as he has received them from his ancestors. He treats these as he does the institutions of his own country, respecting without examining them. Although his frequent visits to the Continent should have taught him to appreciate the credit due to such opinions, yet they remain unmodified; and the name of Papist is still equivalent, in his mind, to intolerant and superstitious. In his own country, nevertheless, those sanguinary laws of Elizabeth, which condemn to death the priest found celebrating Mass; which confiscate the goods of those who give them asylum, and subject to banishment those who pray with them — these laws, although fallen into disuse, are found still to subsist.* English pulpits resound with furious diatribes

* This is a mistake, these laws are now happily repealed. —TRANSLATOR.

against the Catholics. The least infraction of the laws for the observance of holy days is severely punished.* It was not without a great effort that some of the Penal Laws were repealed; and as if to maintain against Catholics a stigma inflicted upon them by a religion which reproaches other creeds with their intolerance, there are certain employments to which even now Catholics are ineligible. England is therefore religious indeed.

On certain serious occasions, when the country is menaced or struck with some great calamity, the Parliament originates, and the King ordains, a fast. No one omits to abstain on this day, or ventures to turn the measure into ridicule. What would the Liberals and Unbelievers of France have said if, in consequence of an epidemic, Charles X. had ordered his subjects to abstain from dinner? There would have resounded cries of jesuitism, the domination of priests, superstition, &c. The journals could not have found space enough in the limits of their columns, nor ca-

* There are no holy days in England but Christmas-day and Good-Friday.—TRANSLATOR.

ricaturists ridicule enough to shower down on the head of the king and his government. William IV. orders a fast to allay the cholera, and every one actully fasts, goes to church, and gives abundant alms. Is it from obedience to the laws, from respect for power? Yes, but it is also from a spirit of religion.

Cold, reasoning, positive, those Englishmen who might not be religious from conviction, are so from a sense of the utility of religion, and from a respect for appearances. Religion enters into all public acts; the want of it is so much felt, that if a town is built, or a part of a town, a church is immediately raised. In truth, the town is commenced by the building of a church.

It may be said that the building of the church is a business of speculation, and that the builder will draw an ample interest from his capital. That may be; but, because the speculation is productive, it may be inferred that the church is frequented by a large congregation. A religious spirit, then, prevails in England.

There are few, even among those most indif-

ferent to religion, who would dispense with the hearing of a sermon, though it dwelt upon the most unpalatable truths, which can be rendered neither less repugnant nor more attractive by the talents of the preacher, or with being present at the service that immediately follows, if some friend proposed it to them. The reason of this is to be found in the dread of making a parade of irreligion. Every one appears collected during the sermon — pious during the service. People listen, keep their eyes on their book, join in the hymn, kneel with the congregation, put their head in their hands, and appear quite absorbed in pious thoughts; no one complains, on leaving church, of the length of the service. For the profane, nevertheless, there is no compensation to be found in the commonplace eloquence of the preacher, nor in the harmony of a choir of children of twelve years of age, mingled with the sharp voices of men of fifty, the whole accompanied by the favourite instrument of England — an organ. The English behave themselves decorously in church; they demean themselves as they ought in the House of God. They may be either *ennuyé*

or impatient while there; that is very possible; but at least they do not show that they are so. Would it be thus, if the religious principle were not deeply rooted in the national mind?

Every thing, therefore, belies that character of irreligion which it has been sought to affix to the English nation. In a country in which so many churches are built and supported—where the excessive endowment of the clergy has only excited murmurs since the question has been made a political one—where religion is never turned into ridicule—where the dogmas of religion are never discussed but with respect—where religion is made to enter as much into the acts of Government as into the habits of private life—where people fast on the occasion of a public calamity,—in such a country there is really a religious spirit as well as a religion; mean hypocrisy, a calculating vice, profitable, at most, to individuals only, cannot be laid to the charge of a whole nation.

EMIGRATION.

If facts were needed to convince one of the misery of the mass of the population in England, they would be afforded by referring to the statistical accounts of the numbers which emigrate each year from the British shores. Many thousands of the population are thus carried off. This emigration is the more prejudicial, inasmuch as it takes place on principles opposed to those which should govern colonization. An over-peopled country generally sends such of her inhabitants as want of work, or a turbulent disposition, render dangerous members of society, to some of her possessions beyond the seas: thus, colonies of great utility to the mother country are created, not only by the employment which they give to unoc-

cupied hands, but also by the springing up of a commercial intercourse, which opens an outlet to the agricultural and manufacturing produce of the mother country. Such colonization is but a removal, which occasions a better distribution of a people. At present, nothing of this kind takes place.

Most of the emigrants direct their steps towards the United States, and it is to her own, not to England's profit, that America peoples herself. It is not the most indigent class that is tormented with the desire to fly the natal soil — not the mechanics, whom the increase and improvement of machinery draws away; nor the day-labourer, whom the destruction of the cottage-system leaves wholly without support, who go to another land in search of the means of subsistence which are denied them at home. No; the emigrants are families threatened with a misery which has not yet overtaken them: they are laborious and long-sighted citizens, who fly from a future charged with evils which their forethought has palpably shadowed out, and from whose influence not even their industry or love of la-

bour could preserve them. The class which thus carries to a foreign soil, to a hostile, or at least a rival country, those "thews and sinews" which, at home, would soon fail to support them, is a class to which it should be the endeavour of an enlightened government to raise the poorer classes, but which ceases to produce and to consume for England, and whose emigration renders the lot of the remaining population still more miserable.

These families export not alone that physical force which their hands supply, but small capitals in money, which a wise foresight had stored up for their establishment in distant lands: they carry with them to the land of their adoption an industry superfluous in their own country, but which, employed with advantage on another soil, developes itself rapidly, and which, in its consequence, will free the country of their adoption of the tribute paid to the country of their birth.

A systematic emigration is doing for England that which the revocation of the edict of Nantes did for France. A drain of thirty thousand individuals who annually leave the

shores of England, occasions a void in the social organization, which the increase of another class of people cannot fill up. Useful citizens depart; they are replaced by dangerous subjects. The fields no longer swarm with husbandmen; there is no labour for them: these are banished by a system of concentration, which creates, out of half a dozen farms, one unwieldy one. The towns thus become superabundantly filled with a set of miserable wretches, who, born in indigence and brought up in poverty, contract at their birth, and develope as they grow older, habits of turbulence and disorder, the only legacy they receive from the degraded beings who gave them birth. Should this class spread itself over the country, it would only bring with it the burden of its vices, but nothing of that spirit of order, the distinguishing characteristic of those who emigrate.

The end which some philanthropic individuals proposed to themselves has not yet been attained by the English system of emigration; for, instead of weeding their native soil of a worthless and degraded population, they have afforded still greater facilities to the de-

parture of those best calculated, by their manners and conduct, to give an example to the remaining population; and, nevertheless, it would have been easier to find employment for this latter class than for the others. All the land in England which is capable of culture is not cultivated: the introduction of a better system of cultivation would give employment to a number of hands; instead, therefore, of seeking for emigrants among the agricultural labourers and small farmers, the English government should have afforded facilities of removal to the already too numerous and unemployed mechanics, who can neither obtain employment for themselves, and have still less chance of obtaining it for the generations which are growing up about them. These are the men who should be induced, at any price, to people the wilds of America and the banks of the Swan River. Separated from the parent state by a wide extent of ocean—removed by an imperious necessity to another hemisphere, they would no longer find excitement for their turbulent spirit; and the factions which trouble the repose of their native land, and menace its

tranquillity, would lose, in such men, powerful auxiliaries. These reflections, which might be indefinitely extended, seem worthy of fixing the attention of statesmen and philosophers—of those who are engaged in the government and interested in the happiness of the people.

THE POOR.

POVERTY wears a different form in England than in other countries, but it is accompanied by adjuncts which render it more overwhelming for those who suffer, and more afflicting for those who observe those sufferings, than in any other part of Europe. Subject to a methodical order, the succour destined for the English poor is tardy in passing from the hands which distribute to those open to receive it. A spirit of charity is more needed in England in the distribution of the rates, than a spirit of philanthropy. In many of the parishes, the poor are the objects of a singular speculation. For the receipt of a much larger sum than would suffice for an intelligent and well-directed charity, a sort of contractor or overseer undertakes, if not to provide for the wants,

at least to stop the complaints of the indigent. It is of little moment whether they are properly relieved, provided they are kept from complaining; and the poor are obliged to submit to this discipline, lest they should find a redoubled severity and harshness on the part of the speculator, into whose hands the relief of their condition has fallen by contract, with little hope of adequate redress from the neighbouring magistrate, to whom they might prefer their complaints. In those parts of England where the poor-rates are administered without the aid of a contractor, they are very much diminished in amount, as well as in efficacy, by the deductions in the form of salaries to parish officers, as well as by the inherent vice of their distribution. Idleness is relieved in as great a degree as industry, and simple distress in the same manner as complete destitution. An inquiry is made as to how many individuals compose the family, and the money is thrown to them, without ascertaining whether there is one of the number who can contribute to his own subsistence and to that of his parents. It is

not considered a matter of reproach, that a tradesman should cause the name of his infirm father to be placed on the list of those relieved by the parish, when he himself has the means of supporting him. Hence it follows, that double the number relieved in any other country are supported by the English parishes. In France, the proportion of those to whom continued or temporary support is necessary, is as one to fifteen in the country, and as one to ten in the towns. In England, the proportion in the country is as one to nine, and as one to six in the towns. In France, the yearly cost of a pauper's subsistence amounts to twenty-four francs.* In England it amounts to one hundred francs, or four pounds sterling. In France, an assessment of one franc fifty centimes on each individual not participating in the relief, would suffice for the maintenance of the poor. In England, this assessment would amount to twelve francs or ten shillings a head. Nevertheless, the condition of the poor is not so wretched in the country in which the

* In this calculation the expense of hospitals is not taken into account.

smaller sum is given, as in that in which the larger sum is levied. Poverty is less intolerable in France than in England, because it is clothed in a peculiar livery, distributed by those who have a care of the poor; this dress, moreover, is always kept in repair by the authorities, and presents nothing revolting to the eye. In England, on the contrary, poverty traverses the streets in silken rags. The rents of an old Indian shawl disclose a nakedness which the garment was destined to conceal; and the ermine formerly appended to an elegant pelisse, is now trailed through the mud by an unfortunate creature without shoes or stockings, supporting on her shrivelled arm a child which sucks her skinny breast, whilst with the other hand she holds out to the passenger a bundle of matches, which she feigns to offer in exchange for alms. This is one of the means adopted to evade the letter of the laws enacted against mendicity, the pauper thus placing herself under the protection of those which encourage trade. This contrast of a clothing, once worn by opulence, and now borne on the backs of those in the last degree

of lowliness and misery, causes afflicting thoughts and melancholy reflections to spring up in the mind.

Poverty is rendered more overwhelming in England, in consequence of the privations superinduced by the excessive price of certain objects which in other countries are within the means of the most limited fortune. The poor man finds it impossible to supply himself with meat, beer, and coals, too happy if the wages obtained for his labour, and the relief received from the parish to supply the insufficiency of those wages, furnish him wherewith to buy bread for himself and potatoes for his family. As to commodious habitations, as for that which may be called the "comfortable" in a state of misery, it is nowhere to be found in England; neither in the cabin of the country labourer, nor in the cellars or garrets of the towns, where families who, perhaps, have never seen each other before, herd together for a night, mingling their nakedness and tears, or what is still more probable, their imprecations and menaces against their more fortunate fellow-creatures.

Excessive misery sometimes compels a family to seek in another parish those means of industry and existence which are denied it by its own. But they meet with immediate repulse—the sojourn of a single day is not allowed, nor are the wretches permitted to take the necessary repose. Back they must go to those privations from which they had in vain attempted to escape, and return to those sufferings which Providence, in creating and uniting society, seems to have pronounced against them. Thus rich and happy England—England of the nineteenth century—has, like Albion of the feudal times, her slavery, and her serfs attached to the glebe, with barely an uncertain prospect of tardy enfranchisement.

The sum levied for the relief of the poor exceeds the enormous amount of eight millions of pounds sterling (two hundred millions of francs). As this weight falls only on landed property,* it becomes an overwhelming burden on the soil. Yet no efforts have been made to

* This is a mistake; it falls very heavily on householders, though it does not in any wise touch funded property.—TRANSLATOR.

diminish the amount of the rates, by a more economical and more rational distribution of them.

Notwithstanding the immense expenditure for the poor, mendicity is not wholly extinguished. It is less remarkable than in other countries; but it nevertheless exists everywhere and among all ages. Upon the frequented roads in the country, as well as in London, one meets with robust paupers, seeking to excite pity by the display of their misery or their infirmities; asking charity either in dull and monotonous tones, or in a sharp and loud treble; they also busy themselves in sweeping the crossings; and exhibit an importunity, which, as it is perhaps to them the easiest, so is it the most successful talent.

Country paupers are generally employed in the making or repairing of roads. The condition of this class of poor would be greatly improved if some portion of the waste lands of each parish were delivered over to their industrious cultivation.

It cannot be contested that the very considerable sum which is devoted in England to the

support of the poor, and to the extinction of mendicity, does not produce the desired effect; whilst in France, at a less expense, and with a less methodical system, more good is effected, and in a better manner, than in England.

THE ENGLISH CANAILLE.

THE lower classes in England are distinguished by a grossness of manners which places them lower in the social scale than any other nation. They are at once ferocious and depraved; their instincts dispose them to a state of permanent aggression against the rest of society. When there are no more direct means of offence, the English *canaille* insult the street passengers, knock against and dispute the wall with them. Their dress is disgustingly filthy, their language vile, their gait heavy and awkward. Their domestic manners are in keeping with those they display in the streets. Among this class, the husband exercises his superiority by blows, and the wife her's in the education of her children. The conduct of both is often

followed by the most disastrous results. The daily newspapers teem with details of domestic murders arising from unbridled violence, and unmitigated in their atrocity by a tardy repentance.

No efforts are made, by the inculcation of the principles or the exterior practices of religion, to correct the vicious inclinations of the people. The only education which they receive is the elements of reading and writing. The effect produced by such a training is to make sharpers and robbers of those who, without it, would be stupified by misery and debauch.

The lower classes rarely enjoy pleasure; their games prove that they know not how to amuse themselves. Their dances are monotonous, and last until the dancers fall down exhausted with fatigue. They drink to inebriety; they eat even to gluttony, without taste, without order, in a word, to excess. What is called love among them completes the measure of their brutality.

Taken collectively, the populace of England is remarkable for its cowardice. Its turbulent

disposition, which it is always prompt to manifest, is easily suppressed by the staff, often by the presence, of a few policemen. The character of individuals must be studied, in order to find among them some indications of courage. The fights in which the lower classes indulge prove that they are capable of violent anger, have a strong tendency to revenge, great contempt for the consequences of the struggle in which they engage, and much generosity during the progress of the combat. Behold two porters preparing to box: they strip in silence, hand their clothes to the spectators, tuck up the sleeves of their shirts, place themselves at two paces from each other, and exhibit a menacing attitude, but a cool and collected demeanour. Blows are quickly given and parried; they are exchanged with a rapidity which in no degree diminishes their force, and rarely, when they *tell*, do they fail to knock down the most vigorous. When one of the parties is down, his adversary can no longer strike him. The fight is suspended, the conqueror assumes his place and his attitude, whilst, raised from the ground, with his head reposing on the knee

of a spectator, the apparently vanquished is encouraged by his friends, and by the stimulus of a glass of porter. The watches of the time-keeper and of the anxious spectators indicate the moment assigned by the laws of the ring for the recommencement of hostilities. This time expired, the battle recommences, and is pursued until the weakness caused by the effusion of blood, as well as by the violence of the blows, and by a total prostration of force, determines the defeat, and puts an end to the combat.

The phlegmatic indifference so remarkable during the preparations for battle, is not affected by the struggle just terminated. Each of the parties leisurely washes his face, and officious by-standers proceed to staunch the wounds of their favourites. The combatants at length put on their clothes and return home, after having wastefully expended in this ignoble boxing-match ten times more courage than well-bred duellists have need of to cross their swords, or to exchange shots which never harm them.

Less removed beyond the pale of their immediate superiors, the agricultural population oc-

cupies a less abject position in the social scale than the inhabitants of towns. The country population is less idle and more looked after; its existence is less precarious; it receives more religious instruction; it sees fewer examples and incentives to vice; it is distinguished by more domestic virtues, and a greater respect for rank. Accordingly, crime is less prevalent in the country districts than in the towns. The populace, or canaille, of England have made no approach to the body of people immediately placed above them. The lowest class of tradesmen is no longer amalgamated with this canaille. The very humblest amongst them is distinguished from this mob by marked habits of order and propriety. These qualities improve in exact proportion with the improvement in their condition: nevertheless, this progress has in no degree disturbed the various shades which distinguish ranks and conditions, and assign to each person his place in the social hierarchy.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

00083925

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016